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[Theodore Hook.]

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Discover meanings that I never mean.
Whatever character I bring to view
I am the father of the child, 'tis true,
But, every babe his christ'ning owes to you.
'The comic poet's eye,' with humorous air
Glancing from Watling Street to Grosv'nor Square—
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'And gives the airy nothings place and name.'"

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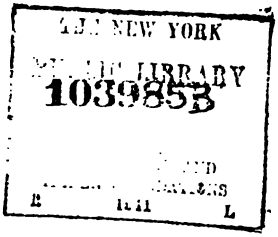
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MAXWELL.

CHAPTER I.

Now, by my modesty, a goodly broker.
SHAKSPEARE.

"HELP yourself, and pass the wine, Mousetrap," said Maxwell, the surgeon, sitting after dinner *tête-à-tête* with the tame man of his family, Mr. Godfrey Moss.

"'Gad," said the Doctor, "what would the world think if they heard *me*, a quiet, middle-aged, retired country gentleman, dignified by the nick-name of Mousetrap?"

"Fairly earned by yourself," replied the surgeon. "Dubbed Mousetrap by a young lady, you surely cannot dislike the appellation;—besides, as you know, you have borne it now some few years in this house."

"Two or three and twenty, as I reckon," said Moss, for it certainly arose in the first instance from your daughter Kitty's being unable to speak plain: and she is now, I rather think, somewhere about her five and twentieth year."

"It certainly arose from your own whimsical character," replied Maxwell: "my poor wife pronounced you a misanthrope; and so Kitty, who could pronounce nothing properly, contrived, by way of making the best of it, to jumble the word into Mousetrap—in which gin of hers you have ever since remained."

"With a little of yours to boot, Maxwell. I say, surgery boy," continued Moss, "before these genteel no-drinking times came into fashion, we have now and then managed a glass or two of toddy over the fire; *you* recounting the adventures of the past day—"

"—And you abusing everybody I happened to mention," said Maxwell.

"That's not *my* fault, Maxwell," said Moss; "the blame lies upon those who deserve the censure; however, I believe I am much quieter than I used to be. I find the world is past improvement, and it is little use trying to mend it."

"If Kitty were here—" said Maxwell.

"—And sorry enough, I am, she is not," replied Moss; "she is a good girl,—one of my splendid exceptions. What a treasure she has been to *you*, since your poor wife's death! —and when such a domestic cretur as she is,—so fond of home, and so bright an ornament of it, happens to be out, the loss is severely felt by a toddling body like me,—a thing of habit."

"It is seldom she gads about," said Maxwell, "but the trine temptation of a new play, a popular actor, and a private box, was too much even for *her* philosophy and forbearance, and she yielded."

"Ay, ay, she has got her sweetheart with her," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of snuff; a certain portion of which went the way all snuff should go, while by far the largest detachment scattered itself among the folds of his coat round his chest.

"Yes," said Maxwell, "I have hopes of happiness from that marriage, if we can bring it about. Apperton is rich and indefatigable in business, with excellent city connexions, and a good property."

"Kate doesn't care a button for him," said Moss, pushing away snuff-box, wine-glass, plate, and all.

"How d'ye mean?" said Maxwell; "she receives his addresses, is civil and kind to him, and has gone so far as to tell me that she has no objection to him."

"Pleasant state of affection upon which two people are to marry," said Moss, "what the creturs call the negative school. Stuff, gammon,—if she takes my advice, she'll never have that 'stockbrokering cretur.'"

"But if she wishes to take mine, she will," said Maxwell.

"Ah! no doubt of that," said Moss, again snuffing his nose; "you are all for the siller—you have made a large fortune by extensive practice, you have got a son you want to make a gentleman of, and you have got a daughter for whom you want to get money in marriage. Mark my words, Mack: I don't say much, but like the birdums in the fable, I think the more. I am not one of your romantic boys, but I know the world; gold does not make happiness—Kittums may give her hand to Apperton, but her heart is not there to give."

"Has she ever made you a confidant, Mousetrap?" said the surgeon.

"Not she—she knows I am not to be had," answered Moss; "she is quite up to me; I enter into no leagues or cabals—I know enough of the world to know that the more pains a man takes to please, the more he gets abused. I have enough to do to provide for myself and for my own wants and worries—I am not going to trouble my head with the concerns of anybody else."

"Your old system, Moss," said Maxwell; "but do you really mean to say, that you suspect her of having an attachment elsewhere?"

"*No*," replied Moss: "her mind is too well regulated to *suffer* the attachment to exist. I don't believe she would give her hand to one, and keep her heart for another—she knows she must not encourage her genuine feelings, and she will conquer them. But she is a woman, and cannot help recollecting—no matter, she's a good cretur—and, if *you* please, we'll drink to her health and happiness."

Moss was quite right in his suspicions. Kate Maxwell *had* lost her heart before she knew Apperton; but the object of her affections had been banished from her presence, and was following an honourable profession in a far distant country, whence, in all human probability, he could never return: and Kate, conscious that her father was inexorably resolved against sanctioning her union with the absent favourite, sought by every means in her power to overcome a feeling which it would have been positive undutifulness to cherish; and purposely mingled more than usual in society, after the departure of the object of her affections—sedulously avoiding the slightest allusion to him, and tremblingly alive to the painful trial of ever hearing his name.

Maxwell himself, to whom the reader has been somewhat unceremoniously introduced in his own house, was, as may already have been discovered, a surgeon of great skill, and consequent high reputation; and, perhaps, no man could live happier, more generally beloved, or more universally respected, than he did. His abilities had procured him extensive practice, his practice produced a handsome revenue; and although he was generally considered to have amassed a large fortune, and to be perfectly independent of the world, still he felt that, while health and fame were yet his own, there was no reason for retiring from a profession, of which he was one of the leaders, and by the continued exercise of which, besides finding occupation for an active mind, he might still accumulate wealth for the benefit of a son and daughter, bequeathed to his paternal

care by a fond and affectionate wife, several years before the period at which this narrative commences.

Maxwell had prudently and progressively risen to his present eminence. His first start in life was in a small, neat house in Hatton Garden, where he commenced practice in the united character of surgeon and apothecary; on his marriage with the daughter of a member of the same profession, he removed to Bedford Row, shaking off the trammels off the shop and bottles, and practising only as a surgeon. In this residence he remained for several years, till his success at the western end of the town induced him to approach the scene of his practice, and shift his quarters to Lincoln's Inn Fields; whence, after the death of his lady, he again removed to one of the streets in the vicinity of Burlington Gardens, where we now find him taking his wine with his friend Mousetrap.

"And where's Master Ned to-night?" said Moss, "is *he* gone to the play to see the deluded creturs act—or is he down the area there, in Stone Buildings, learning to draw conveyances, for which, Mack, between you and me, he is not so fit as a coach-horse?"

"Probably not," said Maxwell.

"Then why do you keep him poking and grubbing down in a cellar, with his nose nailed to a desk all day long? I suppose you expect to see him Lord Chancellor."

"The road is open to him," said Maxwell.

"Ah! so it is to a great many other idle fellows," said Moss, "and a good many of them take to it; but not the road to the woolsack—he has not a turn that way. He did, by good luck, get a degree at Oxford, without plucking, and I am told, is as good a puller as there ever was in Christ Church; but, depend upon it, he is not so good a sitter: besides, he's too rich for a lawyer; I never knew a rich man make a lawyer in my life. His poor mother used to talk to me of the law—stuff—trash—gammon;—it was no use affronting her, poor dear old body, but the truth is, he arn't got it in him."

"Why, I admit," said Maxwell, "the constant look-out upon the glacis of Lincoln's Inn Garden from the sunken story of our friend Diveandpore's chambers, is not an enlivening prospect. However, Moss, if he should be idle, there is his fair cousin, with her large fortune, ready for him."

"What, Jenny Epsworth?" cried Moss, pushing away his box again;—"the demented body!—I think I see her; a cretur with one leg shorter than the other, and a nose like the twisted gnomon of a sun-dial. Trash, Mack! he will never

marry she, take my word for it; but, as the country fellows say in my part of the world, he has gotten a friend as 'wull:' —that Major Overall—the little, lying, dandy, traveller chap—will cut out our Neddy—he'll marry dot and carry one—see if he don't."

"Upon my word, Moss," said Maxwell, "you are more censorious than ever, and you use such extraordinary phraseology, and deliver your ideas in such very odd language, that my new butler, Hopkins, stares with amazement whenever he comes into the room while you are speaking."

"*Try him now*, Mack," said Moss; "the bottle is empty, and as *them* courting creturs are gone to the play, we must do something to while away time till they come back."

"Ring the bell, Moss," said Maxwell; "I have no visits to make to-night, so I am indifferent about it."

"What, no groans to hear?" said Moss, "no guineas to get? —no legs or arms to cut off?—deary me, how dull you must find yourself."

The arrival of Hopkins checked the details of Maxwell's supposed miseries, and the new bottle was ordered.

In spite of Moss's caricature of his host's pursuits, it seems pretty clear that none of our fellow-creatures enjoy life more than the successful member of one of the learned professions. There is, it is true, constant toil: but there are constant excitement, activity, and enthusiasm; at least, where there is not enthusiasm in a profession, success will never come—and as to the affairs of the world in general,—the divine, the lawyer, and the medical man, are more conversant and mixed up with them, than any other human beings—cabinet ministers, themselves, not excepted.

The divine, by the sacred nature of his calling, and the higher character of his duties, is, perhaps, farther removed from an immediate contact with society; his labours are of a more exalted order, and the results of those labours not open to ordinary observation; but the lawyer in full practice knows the designs and devices of half our acquaintance; it is true, professional decorum seals his lips, but *he* has them all before him in his "mind's eye,"—all their litigations and littlenesses, —all their cuttings, and carvings, and contrivings. He knows why a family, who hate the French with all the fervour of British prejudice, visit Paris, and remain there for a year or two; he can give a good reason why a man who delights in a well preserved property in a sporting country, with a house well built and beautifully situated, consents to "*spare it*," at a reduced

price, to a man for whom he cares nothing upon earth: and looks at the world fully alive to the motives, and perfectly aware of the circumstances of three-fourths of the unconscious actors by whom he is surrounded.

The eminent medical man stands, if not upon higher ground, at least in a more interesting position. As he mingles with the gay assembly, or visits the crowded ball, he knows the latent ills, the hidden, yet incurable disorders of the laughing throng by which he is encircled; he sees premature death lurking under the hectic flush of the cheek of the lovely Fanny, and trembles for the fate of the kind-hearted Emily, as he beholds her mirthfully joining in the mazy dance. He, too, by witnessing the frequently recurring scenes of death, beholds the genuine sorrow of the bereaved wife, or the devoted husband,—and can, by the constant, unpremeditated exhibitions of fondness and feeling, appreciate the affection which exists in such and such places, and understand, with an almost magical power, the value of the links by which society is held together.

Far beyond the even tenor of exalted idleness is the happiness which springs from practical utility, varied by recreation and amusement, which the best and most agreeable grades of society afford. The never-failing shot, the infallible billiard-player, however much delighted he may feel with his excellence, cannot enjoy so much positive interest in the sport or the game, as *he* who, ordinarily qualified for the enjoyment of either, has not reduced his bird or his ball, his hazard or his hare, to what may be called a *dead* certainty. There *may be* an anxiety created in the bosom of the sure performer, but it is the anxiety of maintaining an already established reputation, totally distinct from the intrinsic interest in the thing actually to be done, which is felt by those who are sufficiently proficient to render doubt admissible, although the attainment of the object is infinitely more probable than its loss.

Thus it is that the possessor of vast wealth, without a pursuit, takes his enjoyments as mere matters of course, and feels no more pleasure in the luxury with which he is surrounded, than the commoner, in a much lower sphere, experiences in the enjoyment of much more humble pleasures. Enjoyment, indeed, is altogether comparative; and without some variation of the scene, it is impossible properly to appreciate the value of comfort and splendour. To enjoy life with all its acuteness,—to be deeply moved by the sorrows of others, or highly elevated by our own happiness, it is necessary to mingle with all classes, to see such scenes as naturally fall

under the observation of professional men, to hear such tales as meet their ears, and, in short, to participate more or less in the various pains and pleasures which Providence, in its wisdom, has assigned as the lot of those who are forced, as it is colloquially called, "to fight their way through the world." There is more healthful exercise for the mind in the uneven paths of middling life, than there is on the Macadamized road of fortune. Were the year all summer, how tiresome would be the green leaves, and the bright sunshine—as, indeed, those will admit, who have lived in climates where vegetation is always at work.

Maxwell was one of those who had mixed generally with the world, and knew it well. There were points upon which, like all the rest of us, he was blind; and, among others, perhaps, the promised happiness of his daughter, and the extraordinary talents of his son, were two. However, so long as his friend Moss continued an inmate of his house, there was no great chance of his either continuing well satisfied with himself, or extremely proud of his children. Plain speaking was Mousetrap's distinctive characteristic; his conversation abounded in blunt truisms, founded upon a course of thinking somewhat peculiar to himself, but which, when tried by the test of human vice and human folly, proved very frequently to be a great deal more accurate than agreeable.

"Are you sure, Mack," continued Moss, as he commenced the fresh bottle, "that that Apperton is as rich as he makes himself out to be? I know some of them brokering boys are worth a million on Monday, and threepence on Thursday—all in high feather one week, and poor waddling creturs the next."

"I tell you he is a man of great property," said Maxwell.

"Ah!" said Moss, "you tell *me*, because *he* tells *you*. I never saw anything the day we went to call on him but a dark hole of a counting-house, with a couple of clerk-chaps, cocked up upon long-legged stools, writing out letters—a smoky fire-place—two or three files, stuck full of dirty papers, hanging against the wall—an almanack, and a high railed desk, with a slit in a panel, with 'bills for acceptance' painted over it;—that's all stuff—gammon—trash. I like to see ware-houses and hogsheads, and casks and crates, and bales, and boxes.—Don't you understand?"

"But Apperton has nothing to do with bales and boxes," said Maxwell; "he is a stockbroker, of first-rate eminence."

"Oh! that's it," said Moss, shaking off the snuff again—"a

bull and bear boy!—Why, I suppose now, that chap would not belong to Crockford's for the whole world—and yet all's fair in the alley. Oh!—marry Kitty to *him* by all means—they are the chaps 'wot' makes time-bargains—they speculate for thousands, having nothing in the world, and then at the wind-up of a week or two, pay each other what they call the difference; that is to say, the change between what they cannot get, and what they have not got."

A thundering knock at the street door announced some visiter, or, perhaps, the family party returned from the play. Much to the astonishment of the two convivialists, it turned out to be the latter: and into the parlour, after having proceeded more than half way up stairs towards the drawing-room, bounded Miss Kitty Maxwell, Mr. Apperton, and Mr. Edward Maxwell, junior.

"Where is Mrs. O'Connochie?" said Maxwell.

"She would not come in, sir," replied Kate, kissing her father's cheek with all her usual affectionate kindness; "it is too late, and she is too tired—and Dr. O'Connochie has got a touch of the gout, and—"

"Well, Kittums," said Moss, "give me your hand, my girl—how have you been entertained at the playhouse?"

"Why," exclaimed Edward, "Kate did nothing but cry all the time Young was acting—and there was Miss——! What was that pretty girl's name, Apperton?—the heroine—who was forced to marry one man while she was in love with another."

"That's disagreeable enough," said Moss, turning to Miss Maxwell, "arn't it, Kittums?"

"I thought the play infernally stupid," said Apperton; "for *my* part, I did not understand it."

"Umph!" said Moss, bending forwards, and taking a huge pinch of snuff.

"It has made my head ache," said Kitty.

"And made me most uncommonly hungry," said Apperton.

"And me most particularly thirsty," said Edward.

"Oh! the delights of play-going," groaned Moss.

In a few minutes all the requisite refreshments were produced, and after a somewhat hasty, and not very happy-looking repast, the little party broke up for the night. Apperton displayed a wonderful agility in oyster eating—Edward quaffed copious draughts of Combe, Delafield & Co.—Kate spoke little—Maxwell seemed thoughtful—and Moss made himself a large glass of hot gin and water, with sugar in it.

When they separated, Apperton departed for the city—Edward to *his* room—and then Kate to *hers*. Moss put on his great coat, and arming himself with his umbrella, took his leave. As he shook hands with Maxwell, not choosing to trust himself with words, he made a face inimitably expressive of his conviction that Apperton was a blockhead, and that Kitty was quite aware of it.

The present position of the family may now be gathered by the reader. The matter of fact of Maxwell, and the broad caricature of Moss, will have nearly explained the "existing circumstances."

Kate, perhaps, requires a more minute description. She was, as Moss surmised, at the period of which I speak, some four, perhaps five and twenty. Like Liston in the play, she was not what is called regularly handsome; but she had fine eyes—an expressive countenance—white teeth, and a good figure. Her accomplishments were those which, in these days of refinement, every tolerably educated girl is supposed to possess; her manners were extremely pleasing; her disposition beyond compare amiable; and, having been now for several years accustomed to the entire control and management of the domestic concerns of her surviving parent, promised to be to *him* who should be so fortunate as to win her heart and obtain her hand, the best of all possible good things—an excellent wife.

If we were to take Mr. Moss's view of her evidently intended husband, Mr. Apperton, the stockbroker, we should have very little to do but to set him down for a blockhead, and pray that he might never arrive at the consummation of *his* happiness, seeing how likely it was to prove the destruction of hers. However, having already premised that old Godfrey was a bit of a caricaturist, we must look at this worshipper of Mammon through another, and perhaps, a less jaundiced medium.

Apperton was, in the class of society in which he moved, what may be called an average man—the balance on the credit side of his character being made up of worldly knowledge, and a talent (improved by sedulous application and constant practice) for "making money." Moss, in *his* calculation, never took that side of the account into consideration; he saw only Apperton's love of gain, and his devotion to wealth, without entering, per contra, the laudable ambition of rising in the world, and the honourable desire of rendering him-

self worthy the acceptance of so superior a person as Miss Maxwell.

It is true that Apperton's mental qualities were somewhat confined—his energies had been directed to one point:—*to him* matters of taste were matters of trouble; his mode of valuing a fine piece of sculpture, or a beautiful picture, was by inquiring what it would fetch, or how much it had cost. For music he had no ear—for poetry, no fancy. The play tired—the opera distracted him. In fact, his mind was in the funds, and his pleasure in his income; there he laboured and toiled. Speculations, the greatest and the most minute, were deemed equally worthy his attention, and a discount to the amount of three half-pence was received by him with as much care and punctiliousness as if it were a sum likely to liquidate the national debt. But he was good natured, and, when pleased and gratified himself, anxious to please and gratify others—so that if Miss Maxwell had no chance of enjoying with him the exquisitely tender affection which only congenial minds and dispositions can feel (all chance of which she had surrendered when she lost the first and only object of her love), she might fairly expect that rational happiness which, founded on esteem and regard, and the suitableness of a match, is the ordinary lot of persons who marry late in life, especially where the woman marries not her first love.

Moss knew every turn of Kate's mind. She was an enthusiast in matters of taste, without being affected or blue; she admired, without envying talent; and had sufficient judgment to appreciate the works of others, without assuming the airs of criticism, or trying the scheme of imitation. It is clear enough that if she married Apperton (and it seemed a settled thing that it was to be), she would make herself and her husband comfortable—happy, perhaps, is too a strong a word; but comfort was quite as much as he could wish for, and quite as much as she could expect. Principle and reason would render her a good wife: and she was greatly encouraged in taking a favourable view of the marriage by the reflection, that her union with Apperton would meet her father's wishes, and, above all, not separate her from his society; for in case their union took place, it was stipulated that the young, or, rather, the new-married couple, should continue to reside at Maxwell's house,—an arrangement rendered a *sine qua non* on the old gentleman's part, on account of the comforts and advantages which he derived from the presence of his daughter as head of his establishment.

This sort of rational settlement is far too unromantic to be at all interesting; but when it is recollected, that the swain had reached his forty-fourth year, and the nymph her twenty-fifth, some allowance may be made for the unsentimental considerations which filled the mind of the latter,—the affection of the former being directed, over and above the personal and mental attractions of Miss Katherine, to a certain sum of fifteen thousand pounds, three per cent. consols, which was to be transferred to him on the day of the wedding. Far be it from me to surmise that this paltry amount, in any material degree, influenced the addresses of the lover; his acquaintance with Maxwell had originally commenced by Maxwell's employing him, professionally, to invest the savings of his income in different approved securities: and, through that channel, he had become intimate, not only with the affairs of the family, but with the family itself, of which he had latterly become one of the constant associates: for it should be told that Maxwell never dined out, and therefore, always kept places at his table for some half-dozen intimate friends, of whom one or two, or sometimes more, were constantly present at his hospitable board.

Everybody has observed the assimilating powers of constant association. In the outset of the acquaintance of Apperton and Miss Maxwell, love never entered either of their heads, or either of their hearts. Apperton was introduced,—came, and dined—passed the evening, with somewhat of restraint—listened to Miss Maxwell's singing without understanding it—and submitted to Moss's jokes, without relishing them; but time, and a frequent repetition of the visit, smoothed down the difficulties: and after three or four months of that sort of domesticated intercourse to which we have referred, Miss Maxwell began to feel better pleased when Apperton was there than when he was not; and Apperton felt happier at Maxwell's than any where else. To Kate, in his absence, Maxwell had spoken highly of Apperton's activity and zeal, in securing him great pecuniary advantages—and praised his clearness and correctness, his readiness and his principle. To him, in Kate's absence, Maxwell, with all the feelings of a fond father, had extolled her excellent qualities—and having this high opinion of his friend and finance minister, threw out hints not to be misunderstood, of his ready compliance with the offer of any man who could make his daughter happy; and then proceeded to detail his views with regard to her fortune; until, at last, *these two persons* found themselves, as it were, on the brink of

a marriage, never having, up to the moment of which I am speaking, "talked of love."

Katherine, however, had not been left *loverless* during the period of her life at which young ladies generally attract the attention of young gentlemen. The affair of her heart which was blighted, and to which I would rather not refer, was so deeply rooted there, that she rejected offers which might have produced comfort, and even splendour; but at present, upon consulting her feelings, she admitted to herself,—considering, as I have already premised, that she had abandoned all hope of that sort of happiness of which she once had dreamed—that, in the worldly point of view, in which she was conscious Apperton would look at it, marriage was a prudent step, especially, permitted as she would be, to remain under her paternal roof,—a stipulation which overruled her most serious objection —that the state of woman alone in the world, is desolate and helpless: and, seeing that, in the event of her beloved parent's death, she would have no living relations nearer than great aunts (and they residing in the north of Scotland), and a madcap brother, who, the moment he came into possession of the old gentleman's property, would certainly marry —perhaps ill, perhaps well—nobody could calculate which— she decided for the acceptance of Apperton: which she definitively came to, on the very night in which we begin our story; on that very evening in which our sarcastic friend, Mousetrap, decided that she "did not care a button for him."

One most important obstacle, however, remained in the way of her accepting the stockbroker just yet; perhaps the reader may already anticipate it.

He had not yet made her an offer.

CHAPTER II.

"Are you a suitor to the maid you talk of—
Yes or No?"

SHAKSPEARE.

THERE are with all great affairs smaller affairs connected, so that in the watchwork of society, the most skilful artist is sometimes puzzled to fix upon the very little wheel by which the greater wheels are worked. Nobody who saw the anxiety

of Ned Maxwell to second the schemes of Apperton, or rather his father (for Apperton did not appear so sensitively alive to her charms or merits), upon the heart and hand of his sister Katherine, would perhaps be prepared to account for his solicitude upon the point, who did not know that the elder Maxwell always expected his son to play croupier at his dinner table, and in that capacity to do his best to entertain the guests who were seated round it. Not even the representations of Mr. Diveandpore, that evening studies in the basement of Stone Buildings were essential to his son's future elevation in his profession, could induce the surgeon to dispense with the society of this favoured scion of his stock; so that the young gentleman found himself tethered, as it were, to the paternal mahogany—a circumstance little in accordance with his tastes and desires for the enjoyment of that sort of evening diversion which persons at his time of life delight to take, in theatres and other places of resort and amusement, peculiar to the middling classes of London society. By the marriage of his sister with Apperton, the office of vice-president would devolve, if not entirely, yet at least whenever he desired leave of absence, upon his future brother-in-law, of whose favour in his father's eye he had no doubt, and who, from his standing in life and knowledge of the world, was even better calculated to perform the duties and functions of such a station, than the inexperienced youth which Ned professed to be; and who, if he were better initiated or more versed in the ways of society than he appeared to be when at home, naturally laboured under a certain degree of awe in the presence of his father, which prevented his exhibiting to their full extent his powers of conversation, and his talents for amusing a circle of friends, which upon other occasions, when restraint was removed, and he suffered his genius to go in a snaffle instead of a curb, were spoken very highly of.

Thus on all hands it appeared to be settled that Miss Maxwell was to be Mrs. Apperton, and upon all occasions when the agreeable society usually at her father's was assembled, people seemed to defer to Apperton as one of the family, and associate him and the daughter of their host in their thoughts, and even in their conversations, as if the thing were actually settled; and settled it would have been, long before the period to which we are referring, had not Moss happened to take up his quarters in the house for his annual four months' visit. His constant *presence* prevented the social confidential after-dinner *chat, which had he* been away would doubtless now and then

have occurred between Apperton and Maxwell upon this most interesting subject; for at hardly any other period of the day did they meet, except perhaps to transact pecuniary business; and Heaven knows love and money are as little likely to mingle in the same conversation, as oil and vinegar in the same bottle.

It was evident to those who saw clearly, that Maxwell was intent upon the marriage; and there seemed every day an increased anxiety upon his mind, touching the matter, which was not easily to be accounted for, when the relative situation of the parties were taken into consideration. There was something more than met the eye in the interest which the surgeon appeared to take in the stockbroker, and a mystery in the desire he felt to unite his child to his man of business: for such in fact was Apperton. The truth is, that Apperton had assailed Maxwell on his weak side; he had taught him the means, or fancied means, of increasing his already large realized fortune, to an amount far beyond his utmost expectations. These suggestions, which in fact produced their intimacy, were made during the year in which speculations of every sort were offered to the public; when companies sprang up on every side, and loans were in the market for every nation in the universe; when every man dived into mines, and dabbled in canals; when gold was to be found in granite rocks, and pearls in cockle-shells; and when a thousand per cent. was reckoned too small a return for the capital expended. It was at this period that the skilful financier, the enterprising projector, so thoroughly convinced the surgeon of the certainty of his success in accumulating thousands by an outlay of hundreds, that Maxwell not only confided his funds to the management of this approved chancellor of his exchequer, but was anxious to make an alliance for his daughter, which, while it would naturally increase the personal interest of Apperton for the welfare of her family, would place her in the midst of wealth and splendour, and increase her fifteen thousand pounds at least tenfold, under the skilful administration of her enterprising husband.

One evening at length, the adhesive Dr. Moss happened to be absent at some club festival, to which he annually repaired, and Edward, having fulfilled his diurnal duties at the foot of the table, had got "leave of absence" for an hour or two, and no stranger being present, Maxwell and Apperton found themselves *tête-à-tête* after dinner. The conversation between them had been carried on for more than an hour with an undiminished interest—the subject under discussion being the great advantage likely to arise from the establishment of the North

Shields Sawdust Consolidation Company, in which Apperton told Maxwell there was still seventy-four shares to be purchased; they were hundred pound shares, and were actually down at eighty-nine, would be at fifteen premium on the following Saturday, and must eventually rise to two hundred and thirty, for reasons which he gave in the most plausible manner, and which were in themselves perfectly satisfactory as he said, to the "meanest capacity;" a saying with which it might have been perfectly safe to agree.

Whether Maxwell became a purchaser of the valuable scrip of this corporation or not, is not very important, but certain it is, that after the financial *exposé* of Mr. Apperton had ended, the conversation flagged—each of the characters of the drama sipped his wine, and, sipping, looked at the fire. Maxwell cast his eyes off the grate, and fixed them for a moment upon Apperton—Apperton sighed accidentally, and then sipped again.

"I don't think Kate is looking well," said Maxwell.

"Don't you, sir?" said Apperton.

"She is out of spirits," said Maxwell. "I think there is *something* on her mind—something that she does not like to talk *about—I—*"

"It is *love*, perhaps," said Apperton.

"Umph!" said the surgeon; "*I* have thought of that."

"And of the object, sir?" said the stockbroker.

"Why, partly."

"Major Overall, perhaps?" said Apperton; "or our friend Moss?"

"Moss!" said Maxwell; "you are joking. What! Kitty in love with Mousetrap? no, no, you haven't hit it yet."

"Nor am I likely," said Apperton. "Whoever is the object of her choice will be a happy man, Mr. Maxwell."

"I am happy you think so," said the surgeon. "Have you never fancied that her affections might have settled upon you?"

"Me! Mr. Maxwell," cried Apperton, who knew exactly to what the observations of his future father-in-law tended, and who was anxious to ascertain his view of the case, and the state of Kitty's mind, before he ventured upon an offer which might not only offend the young lady, but exclude him from the convenient and agreeable run of the house, but even displease her father, and so lose him the influence which he at present possessed over all his worldly property.

"You," said Maxwell. "If I were asked *my* opinion of the state of her feelings, I should say that you are the person upon whom her affections are fixed: however, it is a doubt very easily solved—*you have* my full sanction to make the inquiry

yourself, and I think I can almost ensure you a re agreeable to my wishes and your own."

"Of Miss Maxwell, sir," said Apperton, "we hav conversed; spoken of the arrangements desirable in est ing her in life; of your wish to retain her in your hou her good qualities; of her valuable acquirements; and delightful accomplishments; but we have hitherto spok hypothetically of her husband:—am I indeed to und that I have your permission and authority to address h lover?"

"Both, Apperton, both!" cried the old gentleman; this very evening—strike while the iron is hot. I ha visits to make: let me see by your countenance on turn, that the wish of my heart is realized, and I shall b happy."

"I can hardly flatter myself with success," said App "for frequent and almost confidential, I may call them, conversations have been with your daughter, I do not re that love ever formed the topic of any one of them."

"So much the better," said Maxwell; "what does say, that love is no more made by talking of it, than a pudding would be. Habit, association, assimilation of communion of thought, kindness without pretension, sol without effort, a tacit agreement and a silent sympathy are the excitements and stimulants of the only sort of lo is worth thinking of. The die-away, sighing, sonnet days of boyish passion, are past with you, Jack; but th pestuous violence of youth has been supplanted by a r well regulated, prudential feeling, which, after all, is the desirable in this world, where married people no more th gle ones, can live upon dew, or sleep on rosebuds. Re the sure foundation of all schemes for mortal happines you and Kitty are, to *my* mind, about as reasonable a God's creatures as I know. I hear the carriage drivin the door—I must be off to my appointments. It is cont my usual principle, and certainly to my ordinary prac move after dinner, but I have two patients to-night in a rious state: one a man of the highest class, the other the lowest;—to the former I go, because his rank enfor attention which his wealth amply repays; to the latter, h his poverty and distress would leave him desolate, if so did not volunteer to watch over his sufferings. H neither of these visits will occupy any great length of ti it will not soon occur again, perhaps, that we shall be

ers. Evening, the poets tell us, is the congenial season ove-making—woman's heart and looks—

——— 'Kindle when the night returning
Brings the genial hour for burning.'

so, Jack, as faint heart never won fair lady——"

——The carriage is at the door, sir," said a servant, inop-mely entering the dinner parlour.

I am coming," said Maxwell. "This, Jack, is the very e for you—lose it not, as you value our dear love."

'*You shall* be obeyed, sir," said Apperton, "let the result *what* it may. I must, however, add my apprehensions —"

——Not a word—not a word about them," cried the sur-a. "Kate knows my wishes—I firmly believe they are in ordance with her own—so success attend you;" saying ch, and shaking his intended son-in-law cordially by the d, Maxwell stepped into his carriage to visit his patients, Apperton proceeded deliberately up stairs, to prefer his to Kitty, in the drawing-room.

Arrived there, he found the amiable Kate alone, but assi-uously employed in arranging papers relative to the domestic ncerns of her father's establishment, seeking as it were, a ment's relief from the ordinary routine of arrivals and visi-s, to bring up the arrears of business, to which, with exem-ry diligence and readiness she applied herself in her parent's vice.

'At work, industrious treasurer?" said Apperton, as he ap-ached the sofa where she was seated; "always doing good, ss Maxwell."

'Always endeavouring to make myself useful when I can," d Kate, still proceeding with her avocation. "Will you ring bell, and order yourself coffee?" continued she.

'None for me," said Apperton, placing himself on a chair ar to the sofa.

"You always take coffee?" said Kate.

"Not to-night," replied the lover, whose embarrassment came, if not yet visible to his companion, quite unequivocal himself. "I have been speaking on matters of great inte-t to your father."

"Possibly," said Kate; "but how they should interfere with r taking a cup of coffee now, I do not very clearly compre-d. I believe the consultations of the Divan itself are en-hed by the enjoyment of that fragrant beverage."

'Yes," said Apperton, not knowing exactly what he was

saying, nor probably what she alluded to, "I believe they —but"—and here he paused, and watching the taper *fing* of his amiable companion as they untied this parcel, and ranged that packet, he began to feel a nervous anxiety to co mence *the* subject, and a doubt upon his mind whether he d venture upon the decisive preliminary measure of catchi hold of one of Kate's hands, by way of leading to the disc sion in which he so earnestly desired to engage her. A silen ensued.

"Why, what *is* the matter, Mr. Apperton?" said Kat "has there been any bad news in the city, and a proportion fall, or any good news, and a consequent rise in your favour funds, which has been disagreeable to you?"

"I am in a situation of great difficulty," said Apperton, "s I hardly know how to extricate myself."

"Condescend to consult me," said Kate, "and I will adv without fee or reward."

"I believe you would be the very best counsellor I co consult," said Apperton, "since you have not only the pow of suggesting the best course for me to take, but the still grea power of ending all my difficulties."

"I—I—have the power of influencing your fate?" said t young lady.

"Indeed you have," said Apperton, gaining something li courage from the apparent good will of Miss Kate to keep u the conversation in the strain he most desired. "I look you, Miss Maxwell, not only as my best adviser, but the so judge in my cause—we have been now for some time so co stantly associated—our interests in your excellent father shared and divided between us—our amusements so much common—our—." During the utterance of these few wor Kate's heart beat rapidly—the writings before her lost the distinctness—her cheeks flushed—a chill ran over her limbs she breathed quickly. Apperton saw the emotion he had cre ted, and caught her hand, which had just dropped the pen the seizure was unresisted—he pressed it to his lips; they spok not—again he pressed her hand—she turned her fine expressiv eyes towards him, half filled with tears, as they were—he fe her tremble. At such a moment silence is the most convincin eloquence—it was clear what must be the result—he drew h towards him—essayed to speak—her eyes were again dow cast, and she seemed to wait in dread and suspense the wor that were to follow.

The sudden stoppage of a carriage, succeeded by a loud ra

ing knock at the street door, and a peal upon the bell, announced an arrival.

"Oh! for mercy's sake let me go," exclaimed Kate, jumping up; "pray, pray put away these papers for me—I cannot be seen at this moment. Who can these people be?"

"Promise to return soon, Kate," said Apperton, resolved to fix his fate upon her answer to the simple request, which, if granted, would, he thought, decide the greater one.

"I will," said Kate, covered with blushes: and with a look that even a stockbroker could not misconstrue, she passed through the back drawing-room to the second staircase, in order to escape from the visiters—there was no light—Apperton attended her to the door. Some mystic, magical, masonic sign, I suppose, had, during that short interval, confirmed his hopes, for he returned to the drawing-room, glowing with the proud consciousness of conquest, thrilling with pleasure, and not quite certain whether he stood upon his head or his heels.

"Mr. Moss and Major Overall," said a servant, announcing the arrivals.

Two worthies from the other side of the Styx would have been more welcome to Apperton than the snarling Godfrey and the superlative Major.

"Heydey," said Moss, "where's Kate?—what's gone with the Kittum cretur?—what, no tea—no coffee, and very little fire—sad doings. Where's the grand carver himself—what's gone with Maxwell?"

"He is labouring in his vocation," said Apperton; "visiting his patients."

"While I am losing mine," said Moss. "So that's the way—he goes peeping into holes, and scraping bones, and tying up legs to get money, in order to throw it away in the hunt after more. Never mind, we must have some tea and toast—eh, Major?"

"I never take tea," said the Major—a fair, sharp set man, with large blue eyes, and a small figure, a shrill voice, a dominant passion for superlatives, and a superlative contempt for his own country, which he incessantly expressed, in a voice the shrillest that ever was heard—"never—no, never take tea—depend upon it, tea is low—vulgar—terrible—dreadful—unwholesome—poisonous—destructive; coffee, when you can get it good, which one never does in England, is healthy—refreshing—excellent—but tea—coarse—low."

"Well, well—never mind, Major," said Moss—"I have never set my foot out of England yet, and never will if I can

help it; and certainly not till there is a suspension bridge across the straits from Dover to Calais. I like my tea,—but then I must have my Kittums to make it for me. Stockbroker boy, ring the bell—I'll do as much for you when I'm as young. Let's know where the cretur is; *she* is not gone visiting, I suppose?"

"I rather think Miss Maxwell is not very well," said Apperton.

"Harassed—worried, poor thing," said Moss; "thinks too much of days that are gone. Has she been out of the room long?"

"Not very long," said Apperton.

"I say," said Moss, "have you been talking some of your love-nonsense to her, and so driven her away?"

Apperton would with pleasure have exterminated him on the spot.

"Not a fair question, Doctor," said the Major; "love is not a subject to talk about; not that there is any such thing as love in England; climate too damp—dismal—dark—foggy—wretched—consumptive—aguish—dull—cold—cheerless.—Italy, land of song—there sky bright blue—all genial—stars sparkling—moon like silver—bright—splendid. Jove—wonderful; and the women—oh!"

"Ah, I dare say they are mighty fine creturs," said Moss; "but I am quite contented with the beautiful red and white of our own charming countrywomen."

"Red and white!" cried the Major, in a tone that reverberated through the room; "horrid—low—coarse—vulgar;—red—white! unnatural!—Brown—olive—black hair—eyes, jet—splendid—fine—exquisite—soft—delicious—wonderful!"

"Make my best compliments to Miss Maxwell," said Moss, to a servant who had answered the bell, "and ask her if she is likely soon to be visible; and if I am to have any tea, or perish with thirst before she comes."

"I expect Maxwell back every minute," said Apperton.

"I hope he will come soon," said the Major, "for I must go to the Opera. Ned is there to-night—Medea—Jove—grand—wonderful—magnificent—splendid—bold—fine—majestic!"

"Trash—gammon," said Moss; "I'm like Mungo in the play—'What good me hear me no undertand.'"

"The music you can comprehend, Mr. Moss," cried the Major; "the universal language of the soul. Oh, Jove! is it not fine—wonderful—splendid!"

"I like to be pleased, better than astonished," said Moss.

"And for *my* part, Moss," said Apperton, "you are so deuced fastidious, that I should be very much astonished if you ever *were* pleased."

"Well said, Stockbroker," cried Godfrey; "that wouldn't be bad in the alley, or in that civilized club of yours, where, if a stranger gets in by accident, you cut off his tail, or stick his wig full of pens till he looks like a porcupine."

"Pens!" said the Major, shuddering, "horrid—coarse—low—vulgar—detestable—shocking! Jove—terrible!"

In the midst of these exclamations Maxwell arrived, and led in his daughter, who appeared unable to stand alone, and seemed as if she could sooner have died than look at Apperton. "What, back from the club so soon?" said Maxwell, "I didn't expect you much before suppertime."

"Yes, Mack," said Moss; "the Major is of the new no-wine school; he is going to the Opera, and I had no means of getting home unless he gave me a lift; so, as I knew my child here wouldn't mind giving me some tea, here I am, and happier here than any where else."

Maxwell took Apperton aside, and led him into the unlighted drawing-room, and Moss began, according to custom, to play with what he was pleased to call his Kittum's paws—meaning thereby the delicate hands of Miss Maxwell; but the eyes of the poor girl followed the object of her thoughts. She was conscious that her father was congratulating Apperton upon the successful issue of his suit; for as she stood committed, she had told the whole history of their conversation to Maxwell the moment he returned, had repeated all that passed, and owned herself pledged and plighted to his favourite suitor.

Never were two people more perfectly *de trop* than Mr. Godfrey Moss and Major Overall at this moment; nor could they very well avoid perceiving it. Moss, who was as quick as lightning, and discovered great truths from small events, while Kate had crossed the room for her handkerchief, which lay on an opposite sofa, whispered to the Major, "The ice is broken—I'd lay my life the stockbroker has popp'd—"

"Curious!" exclaimed the Major. "Strange—eh—wonderful!"

"I say, Kate," said Godfrey to Miss Maxwell, in a whisper, "I say, d'ye mean to have him?"

"I don't know what you mean," said she, with a face perfectly crimson.

"You *do* though," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of snuff.

"Well, my girl, I hope you'll be happy if you do have him—I don't see why you should not, but still—"

"Pray be quiet," said Kate, in a state to which nobody *but* a privileged man of the first class would have ventured to bring her—"I must leave the room if you go on."

"What! and give me no tea?" said Moss.

"The servants will give you tea,"

"Thank you," said Moss; "no—no—my privilege here is that *you* make it for me, and give it me with those snowy hands, else would I not touch it."

"Upon my honour I must run away," said the Major. "Will you forgive me, Miss Maxwell? Jove—nothing but a positive engagement could draw me hence—I call this the paragon of English houses—charming, agreeable, delightful, sociable. May I call to-morrow to give you a description of the evening?—Your brother is to be with us—we are to meet—charming fellow, Ned Maxwell—excellent—good—capital—agreeable—elegant—clever—delightful—splendid. Adieu—good night. Mr. Moss good night, I won't interrupt the *tête-à-tête* in the next room—horrid business—terrible—dreadful—distracting—infernal—Jove—adieu. I can find my way—good night—good night."

Saying, or rather squeaking which, the Major took his departure, and by so much was Kate relieved; for although for once she would rather have been without her ancient ally, Mousetrap, still his presence was not so irksome upon the present occasion as that of the Major, whose views and pretensions were as clear to Moss as noonday, and whose violent affection for Ned Maxwell, he perfectly well knew, had its origin in a desire to detach him from the scheme of marrying the rich and rickety Miss Epsworth, upon whose fortune the Major himself had a most subtle design.

His departure was the signal for Maxwell's return to the front room, accompanied by Apperton; nor had they long been there, before the natural feelings of the younger couple, and the great gratification of Maxwell himself at the result of the affair, began to develope themselves; and after a certain degree of blushing and laughing, and something like weeping, Moss was let into the secret: and having wished the *young* folks all sorts of happiness, in his odd and whimsical way, he and Maxwell retired to one corner of the drawing-room to play a quiet game of chess, leaving Kitty and her husband elect, to descant in a *tête-à-tête*, in another corner, on the delights of rational love, and the prospects of happiness afforded by an union so agreeable to all parties, where the affection by

ch they were inspired possessed none of the fierceness of idged passion, but was founded upon esteem and friendship, a long, close, and unprejudiced observance of each other's luct, manners, accomplishments, and qualifications; a dis-ation which ended in the mutual declaration of the parties, no two people in the whole world were so happy as they. The wonted arrangements for supper (a meal continued in axwell's house from the sociable times of his youth), put an d to the dialogue, at about the same period at which the ess party had concluded their warfare; the conversation be-ne more general, Maxwell was in good spirits, Moss good-noured, and all went extremely well until the party broke each full of the thoughts of what had occurred. Apperton, ghted at his success, seemed to tread on air as he returned he city; Maxwell kissed and blessed his daughter with our and enthusiasm; Moss muttered, "It will come to no d," loud enough to be heard, before he was well out of the ; and Kate lay awake until near five o'clock in the morn-, about which time she fell asleep, and dreamed that her first lonly love had just returned to England with a large fortune.

CHAPTER III.

——Oh! I will keep this secret.
No racks, no shame shall ever force it from me.
DRYDEN.

THE reader has by this time become in some measure inti-te with the domestic concerns of a family in the middling s of society; that class in which, more generally than in a ier sphere, true happiness is to be found. Whether Mr. s, whose inauspicious augury might have been overheard by twell's servants as he departed (and most probably was), justly prophetic or not, time only must determine. It be my duty to trace the progress of the plighted pair gh the paths of matrimonial life. In the mean time, and e the important ceremony is performed which is to unite eternally, let us for a moment glance at the prospects and its of the volatile Ned, of whom, at present, my reader s but little.

ith regard to the choice of a profession for him, Moss was

perfectly right, and Maxwell certainly wrong. He had not one qualification for the bar; for besides not being poor, he had neither patience nor perseverance, nor a disposition to *drudge* and turmoil, and copy conveyances till his fingers ached, in the society of young men whose tastes were congenial to their pursuits, and whom he voted bores and asses, because they were seriously intent upon their future success in their professional career.

It was an ungracious task for Diveandpore, under whom he was placed, to repeat his feelings and apprehensions on the subject to the elder Maxwell; but when he acceded to his son's constant absence from chambers in the evenings, the compliance with his father's desire upon the point was couched in language which, to a less fond and prejudiced parent, would have plainly betrayed the conviction of the lawyer, that as far as ultimate results were to be regarded, it mattered very little whether he attended in the evenings, or even in the mornings.

As it must therefore seem pretty evident to the reader that Ned Maxwell was not likely ever to grace the bench, even if he were called to the bar, it may be as well to inform the same patient personage that Ned, even before the period to which we now particularly refer, had determined in his own mind never to marry Miss Epsworth. He knowing, or rather being assured of his father's opulence, by his crony, the stockbroker, naturally argued with himself thus: why should I marry one of Byron's "dumpy women," for the sake of money, when I have money enough of my own—why sacrifice my youth and happiness to the filthy lucre of gain?—and as for disappointing *her*, there's Major Overall ready to jump—ay, down her throat, if she would but smile engagingly enough to give him the opportunity, and ready to carry her off to Florence, and diet her upon macaroni and salad, in marble saloons, to the utter annihilation of all her English ideas and feelings;—and under the circumstances, and at *his* age, Ned Maxwell was right.

It seems to me moreover in some degree necessary, that I should still further initiate the reader into the *arcana* of the Maxwell establishment, and point out what may appear, at first sight, some of the *désagrémens* of the professional life which I have endeavoured so much to extol, and so anxiously to advocate.

At certain seasons Mr. Maxwell was in the habit of delivering lectures, in a room called the theatre, at the back of his house; which lectures, aided by a demonstrator, selected from among the ablest practical men in the profession, were carried on, not without illustrations afforded by the dissection of sund

odies, procured for the purpose, and housed in the "stilly ight," in a receptacle contrived for the purpose: to which an ntrance from a dark and retired mews was secured, through hich secluded portal, not only the dead subjects for conside- ation, but the living tyros for whose improvement they were urnished, made their "entries and their exits." During this particular period of the year, Maxwell himself was more nervous and irritable than at any other: his feelings seemed in a constant whirl: and his mind, divided between the anxiety *for* research and information, and the constant apprehension of *having* his house pulled down by an ignoble rabble, was in a perpetual ferment. "Lecture time," in fact was a season of dread and disagreeableness to all the members of the family: and Moss, who never was more delicate in his observations, used to speak of it in terms which, as they were not particularly pleasant to those who *heard* them used, shall not offend the eyes of my readers.

It is here absolutely necessary to state (however uncomfortable the admission of the fact may render the more sensitive portion of the public), that in the pursuit of his studies, or rather for the advantage of those who studied under him, Maxwell had, like all his brethren, a sort of tacit understanding with a race of men whose calling, however useful it may be, is held in utter abhorrence by the world, and who were in the habit of furnishing the aforesaid subjects for his dissecting-room. With these nocturnal caterers for scientific knowledge, Maxwell had occasionally confidential communications, which were not unfrequently held when his family thought, or chose to think, that he was poring over books, or examining "preparations;" and it was upon *him*—at least he always said so—that the two sharpers who bargained for half-a-crown to remove a drunken man from a neighbouring ale-house, played their shameful trick.

They agreed with a certain landlady, who could by no means rid her house of an intoxicated guest, to carry him home, if she would reward their labours with half-a-crown: a proposition to which the helpless widow most readily assented. A sack was procured, into which they thrust the unconscious convivialist, and conveyed him to the door of Maxwell's surgery; where, late as it was, Maxwell himself was *studying*. A knock announced the arrival of the rogues—the professor, anticipating the cause of the summons, opened the door:—

"Subject?"—

"Yes—male."—

"Price?"

"Eight guineas."

"Agreed—bring him in," said Maxwell, "and I will *fetch* the money."

The surgeon proceeded to count out his cash, and having caused the sack and its contents to be placed within a side room on the right-hand of the passage, discharged his debt, fastened the door, and proceeded to untie the bag which contained his newly acquired treasure, when a voice from within exclaimed, "I say, come, none of your nonsense—what are you at?"

In an instant, Maxwell saw how he had been treated, and opening the door, called lustily after the two fellows, who had nearly reached the end of the mews. Determined not to be easily beaten, he pursued, and nearly came up with them, when they called a halt, and made show of battle.

"What d'ye want with us, sir?" said one of the fellows, conscious that during the prevalent popular excitement upon the question, no surgeon in Maxwell's circumstances dare appeal to the police—"what d'ye want with us?"

"Why," said Maxwell, breathless with rage and running, "you villains, that's no subject I've bought of you."

"'Tis a subject, though," said the other; "it's a man, and a deusedly queer subject too."

"Yes," said Maxwell, "it is a man, but he's alive!"

"Alive!" said the other—"is he?—why then as you are a doctor, sir, you may kill him when you want him."

With which pointed reply they again took to their heels, and were out of sight in a minute.

After this shameful imposition, which contrary to the respectable evidence of Mr. Joseph Miller, Maxwell used gravely and positively to declare had been actually practised upon himself, he became more than ever cautious in his proceedings; and about the period so much dreaded in his family—"lecture-time,"—was wont to pay more frequent visits to the receptacle for subjects than he had been formerly in the habit of making.

It may be, therefore, easily imagined, that however anxious he might be for the conclusion of the affair between Kate and Apperton, and however evident it must be that they had no occasion to postpone the ceremony, in order to afford time for maturing the charms of the bride, or increasing the steadiness and experience of the bridegroom, still the lecture season would be a very uncomfortable period at which to fix the

l celebration." *That* over, Maxwell thought he might himself with a little relaxation, and after despatching ɔy couple to some rural seclusion for the enjoyment of ɜymoon, join them, with his friend Moss, at one of the watering-places, where, in the society of his happy ı, and the enjoyment of fresh air and wholesome exer- ı might lay in a stock of comfort for his life, and at all a stock of health adequate to the expenditure of the ɜ season, the greatest part of which was to be spent in ırtments of the sick and in the society of the suffering. ɜ, who had a great turn for nauticals, and moreover a ıffection for shrimps and lobsters (the shelly-creturs, as to call them), joined in this arrangement with high de- ıd anticipated what he styled a "sniff of the briny," ident pleasure.

Kate the lecture-season, at all times disagreeable, now ɔd perfectly odious; and the occasional introduction to ıer's table of select specimens of pale-faced pupils, who ıvited in batches to dinner before the dissertations of ning, became more than ever unpleasant, now that a ene had opened to her view, and that she felt it her duty y no more—to devote her thoughts and attention to her d husband, whose assiduous manner and unremitting de for her happiness and comfort (after *his* fashion), the greatest satisfaction on the part of Maxwell, and ɔd him occasionally a good word from the grumbling y Moss.

ı all his care and all his kindness, however, it must be ɔd that after Kate had opened her heart to receive his ʌith a perhaps somewhat unreasonable expectation of ing like ardour and enthusiasm, she anticipated a per- of disappointment in the worldliness of his ideas, the expanse of his mind, and a too frequent recurrence to d what is called prudence, to suit even *her*—for the best- ed female mind is tinctured with an enthusiasm wholly ʌn to uncalculating man. Woman theorizes on the ınd its ways, and feels that she could sacrifice any thing, ıing for the object of her affection. Man—particularly man as Apperton—looks at both sides of the question, ıe would have said, examines the debit and credit side account. This particular man, Apperton, had not the ıt touch of romance in his whole character; and if he ad a predisposition to such an amiable weakness, his g prudence, and the constant ridicule exercised by

Moss upon any thing like sentiment or feeling, had completely obliterated every spark and scintillation of it from his mind.

"Where shall it be then?" said Katherine; "you have only to fix, and I shall be happy to accede to your proposition."

"No, by no means," replied the lover; "*you* must decide and *I* shall obey."

This was with reference to the watering-place to which they were to retire to pass the honeymoon—since watering-place, by the influence of Moss, Maxwell had announced it to be.

"What say you to Hastings?" said Miss Maxwell.

"Hastings?" said Apperton, snarlingly.

"The country about it," said Kate, "is pretty, the situation sheltered to suit my father; there are many agreeable objects in the neighbourhood, and the spot itself is historically interesting."

"So it is," said Apperton, "and I dare say it is a nice place enough; but they gave some friends of mine, last year, an infernal bad dinner at an inn there—thirteen shillings a bottle for claret—and the fish not over-good."

"Well then," said Kate, "the Isle of Wight,—a perfect paradise?"

"Yes, the pictures I have seen of *that* are very pretty," said Apperton; "but then there's all the trouble of the sea, and additional expense and uncertainty."

"Well then, Brighton?" said the nymph.

"Why, yes, Brighton, I think, is best," replied the swain. "It's nearest to town."

"Not so secluded as it might be," sighed the bride-elect.

"Not quite secluded," said Apperton, "but sufficiently so. If you like retirement, any of the small streets away from the sea would answer; and the rents, I suppose, are much lower in those parts of the town, than on the cliffs."

"Ah!" sighed Kate again.

"They tell me the beef isn't good at Brighton," continued the stockbroker; "but I dare say we shall be very happy: the mutton, my friend Hopkins says, is famous, and fish I know is uncommon cheap; and besides, there are stages to town almost every hour, so that one can run up to business when it gets dull."

There was no romance in this—hardly enough of pleasurable anticipation to make Apperton's objections interesting—however, whenever he came out with his matter-of-fact prosing, poor Katherine sighed, and thought of ——, but I have *promised not to say* whom.

"Amoret and Phillida," cried Moss, from the front drawing-room; "come, come, tea-time, tea-time; surely you have had enough of your honey stuff and twaddle. Ring the bell, Stockpoker, let's have up the toast, and the twanky; you have plenty of time for cooing when I am not here—I like none of your turtle work, unless with plenty of green fat."

"We must go," said Kate, "or my dear Mousetrap will be angry."

"Where's your father, Kittums?" said Moss, "pottering about in the surgery, I suppose? Well—if I had his money—*his nibble*, as I call it—I'd leave the dead creturs in their graves."

"Science requires the exertions of scientific men," said Apperton: "no man could mend a clock, if he did not know how it was made—he must look at the works before he can regulate the machinery."

"Mighty good," said Moss; "but the simile won't hold; you can't work it out. If I were you, I'd never attempt to be figurative except in 'Change Alley."

"Mr. Moss," said Miss Maxwell, "let us consult *you* about our retreat."

"What retreat?" said Moss.

"Why, after our marriage," said Apperton.

"Ugh," said Moss, thrusting half a handful of snuff into his already curled up nostrils; "your retreat! there's no retreating after marriage."

"Now don't be cross," said Katherine, who saw that Moss was about to exhibit, in plainer terms than she thought would be agreeable to Apperton, his real sentiments upon their union, "you know what we mean—where shall we go to?"

"Oh, to spend the honeymoon!" said Moss. "Into solitude, with four horses and two postilions, a man servant, and a woman servant, all covered with white ribands, by way of privacy,—'gad, I don't know—thank my stars, I never tried that scheme of happiness."

"We were thinking of Brighton," said Apperton.

"By way of seclusion!" said Moss. "Well, Brighton will be as good a residence as any other; there's nobody there knows much of either of *you;* and the place has got so big, that you may be as sung as you please: a large town and a large city are the best possible shelters for love-matters. Ay, go to Brighton—the prawns for breakfast, the wheatears (as the cockneys delicately call them, without knowing what they are talking about) for dinner, and the lobsters for supper, with a

segar, and a little ginnums and water, whiffing the wind, and sniffing the briny out of one of the bow-window balconies—that's it—Brighton's the place, against the world."

"Well then, Brighton let it be," said Apperton; "and you, who seem to know all the advantages of the place, shall be appointed caterer. For as to trusting to servants in a place like *that*, I declare I would as lief be hanged."

"Hanged, would you," said Moss; "what, like the respectable merchant who suffered, as they call it, for murder this morning?"

"Oh, my dear Mr. Moss," cried Katherine, "don't talk of that."

"Talk of it, why there's nothing else talked of that I hear," said Moss; "a gentleman criminal is too rich a treat to be overlooked; and a murderer in good society forms a tale of middling life much too interesting to be passed over in a hurry."

"Ah!" said Apperton, "I knew Hanningham well; and certainly I should have said he was the last man likely to commit such an act—but there's no trusting to appearances."

"True, Stockbroker," said Moss, "I never *do* trust to them, though others do." And here he cast one of those eloquent glances across the table at Kate, in which he was accustomed silently to express his unconquerable dislike of her betrothed.

Just at the time when this conversation took place, the feelings of the public had been greatly shocked, and their interest deeply excited, by the commission and expiation of one of those great crimes which every now and then agitate society. A merchant of eminence had, in a fit of passion, it was supposed, but never exactly known, from the nature of the evidence, shot his partner dead. The case against him was so plain and clear, that his previous high character, and the respectability of the station which he filled in the world, made no impression upon the jury; the judge, with every disposition to be lenient, saw no probability of staying the strong arm of the law, and the unhappy victim of irritation had suffered its last penalty on the morning of the day to the evening of which we are now referring. He had been executed at Horsemonger-lane prison, on the scaffold where Despard and his associates paid the forfeit of their mercenary treason, and where a treacherous friend had before yielded up his life for a murder not very dissimilar from that which had that morning been expiated.

The day had been congenial to the dreadful consummation of the law—heavy and incessant rain had deluged the town;

and the curiosity of the people had been so far cooled by the weather, that a much smaller concourse of spectators than was expected had assembled to witness the execution, which was with great difficulty got through; the incidental ceremonies were much abridged, and in short, it seemed as if nature—or that which is called by the thoughtless, nature—had borne testimony to the guilt of the culprit, and thus awfully confirmed the justice of the sentence which had doomed the wretched criminal to an ignominious death.

Yet such is human fallibility, that the very magnitude of his *crime had* rendered the murderer an object of interest; particularly among the better classes of society; and even the tenderest hearted of the tender sex were not wanting in excuses and palliation—"His partner must have been a villain to have provoked him"—"Hanningham was such a pleasant, amiable man"—"so popular"—"they did not believe he could be guilty"—"he never could be hanged"—"he would destroy himself in prison"—"he must be reprieved"—"his sentence would be commuted." And then they read with the deepest attention, that the prisoner, at the trial, was dressed in black; that he occasionally conferred with his counsel, and several times during the summing up of the jury, was observed to apply a white handkerchief to his forehead; nay, in his own mercantile circle, bets were offered, first as to his acquittal, then as to his pardon, and wagers of hats (a sporting *medium* in the civic world) were freely laid on either side; while in the stock-exchange, policies were actually opened to pay so much, to secure so much more, if he were actually executed.

It is extraordinary, but not more strange than true, that such sensation should be excited when gentlemen suffer; but so it is; and certainly of all the culprits of middling life who have publicly exhibited themselves on the last stage of existence, Hanningham, the London merchant, created, or seemed at the time to create, the most powerful effect upon society.

"Well then, we are decided for Brighton," said Katherine.

"And a good decision too," said Moss; "Tunbridge Wells is like Cranbourn Alley carried to Clapham Common; Bognor, with its pebble-stone rocks, dulness below misery; Hastings, a row of houses in a fives-court; Worthing, a bad imitation of its neighbour; Bath, a tea-kettle, always boiling and steaming; and Cheltenham a cockney edition of Hammersmith;—no, no, Brighton for ever. But pray, Kittums, when is the ceremony to take place?"

Kate blushed to the eyes—Apperton seemed to expect *her* to

make a reply—she wished to hear what the lover would say t account for a delay, which, after the enthusiastic reception o his offer by her father, seemed to her rather unaccountable.

"Why," said the tender swain, looking at his beloved, "I want to manage it, so as to get over next settling day."

"What!" cried Moss, "no chance of waddling?"

"Nonsense," said Kate, "what do you mean?"

"Oh! *he* knows," said Moss; "the wind-up is sometimes serious."

"Business sometimes presses," said the stockbroker, "and I should like to get rid of all my work before I left town, which, at any time is rather inconvenient to me, but particularly this season."

Poor Kate! every word her accepted lover uttered, sounded disappointment in her ears; for though, as I have already shown, she expected none of that buoyant, unearthly feeling which fills young hearts and ardent minds, in her union with Apperton, still she—*even* she—*did* think that he kept his anticipations somewhat too near the earth. However, he was a man of business; and it was all for the best; and romance in the City, or sentiment in the Alley, would be thrown away; and so she went on "never minding" it, until she began to settle down into complacent discussions of matters of fact, and an assiduous calculation of expenses and consequences, for which, be it understood, the character of her past life had not ill prepared her.

There were moments, however, when the present, compared with the past, seemed like one sad blank. Katherine, on the eve of marriage, looked to her father's death as the greatest calamity that could befall her; for though she gave herself to Apperton, her love, her hope, her reliance, were in her parent; and this decided affection was another proof, if more were wanting, of the absence of that ardour which is the orthodox concomitant of mutual passion.

In the midst of these speculations as to their retreat for the honeymoon, the contrivers were disturbed by the arrival o Maxwell himself. He entered the room hastily and with trepidation—he looked pale—flurried—the tremor of his hand was discernible by the motion it imparted to a candlestick which he held—he looked wildly about him—seemed alarmed and even disappointed, at finding his usual guests in their ordinary places in the drawing-room.

"My dear father," said Kate, "what on earth has happened?"

"Happened, child!" said Maxwell, "nothing has happened —what should happen?"

"Your looks, sir," continued his daughter—

"—are not to be regarded," interrupted Maxwell.

"Have you seen the ghost of a patient, Mack?" said Moss. "What a lucky thing for the faculty it is, that dead men tell no tales."

"Give me some tea, Kate," said the surgeon, first putting down, and then putting out the light; "I have a very bad headache."

"You had better go to bed," said Moss; "a snooze in the early part of the evening is a capital remedy."

"No," said Maxwell; "I have to visit a patient late to-night."

"To-night, sir?" said Apperton.

"Yes," said Maxwell, "it is a pressing case."

"Oh! one of your life or death boys, I suppose," said Moss. "What can't the cretur keep his leg on till the morning?"

"It will save him much torture and much misery, if he can be released to-night," said the surgeon.

"Oh!" said Moss, "he'll be released soon enough, no fear of that. Come, stockbroker, a pinch of your snuff."

"Have you ordered the carriage, sir," said Katherine.

"No, my dear child," said Maxwell, "I have had the horses out a great deal to-day; I can walk; the night is fine, and the air will do me good. I am to meet another medical man at twelve."

"At twelve—what, midnight!" said Moss—"walk out at midnight!—why your myrmidons will turn the tables upon you, murder you, and send you to your own shop to be cut up."

"No fear of that," said Maxwell; "at least no fear that will hinder me from doing my duty to a fellow-creature."

"The weather has cleared up wonderfully since morning," said Apperton; "the morning was so dreadfully wet that they had a difficulty in finishing the law upon that amiable gentleman, Hanningham."

A deep groan resounded through the room—every eye turned towards Maxwell—it was from his lips the sound had escaped. "I believe," said he, "that Hanningham was innocent, after all."

"Impossible, sir," said Apperton; "the proofs were clear as light against him; besides, I heard that he confessed the whole affair last night."

"That I doubt," said Maxwell, "and this I *know*, that tho who are best acquainted with him and knew him most *int* mately, are even now assured that he was not guilty *of th* murder."

"That's rather a late discovery," said Moss; "the man's hanged, and now they find out he is innocent. Some mor tea, Kittums, dear."

"The glorious uncertainty of the law," said Apperton.

"Rather the inglorious certainty," said Moss, "as far a regards Mr. Hanningham."

"Are you going far, my dear father?" asked Katherine.

"Not very far, my dear child," replied Maxwell.

"And so late?"

"Yes," said the surgeon, "so late—it sounds quite myste rious, doesn't it?"

"I'll walk with you, sir," said the son-in-law elect.

"Or have a hackney coach, Maxwell," said Moss, "an then you can set me down. Are you going my way?"

"No," said Maxwell.

"Nor mine, sir," said Apperton.

"No, I must go alone," said Maxwell.

"Oh! I see," whispered Moss to the stockbroker; "som delicate affair—secrecy—mum—a lady of quality in distress.

"Not so, Moss," answered his friend; "so far I can safel assure you: but our profession has a privilege which I am sure your good sense will not permit you to try to violate— we have a confidence reposed in us, and we should deserve t lose it if we once could betray those who trust us."

At this moment, a sudden and violent noise, as of som heavy object falling, seemed to shake the house.

"Mercy on us!" said Katherine; "what is that?"

"What is it?" said Moss.

"Nothing, nothing," said Maxwell; "something has falle down in the room above."

"It must be in *your* bedroom, sir," said Katherine—"I'l run up, and see what it is."

"Not for the world, Kate!" cried her father, springing o his feet; and rushing across the room, he seized the candl which the young lady was on the point of lighting, preparator to starting upon her voyage of discovery. "No, no; give m the light—I can go, child—it is nothing—a book, or a chair or, perhaps, the servants—here, here—I'll go myself and se what it is, since you all seem so mightily alarmed."

Saying which, the agitated master of the mansion, conceal

ing as well as he could the feelings which nearly overpowered him, quitted the apartment.

"Something's wrong with that cretur," said Moss. "Go up, Kittums, and see after him; I'm sure all is not as it should be."

"What can be the matter?" said his daughter.

"Oh, nothing is the matter," said Apperton. "Mr. Maxwell is always anxious and nervous when he has any difficult case on his mind, and gets fidgetty and irritable—"

"*But* where *can* he be going so late?" said Katherine, "so unusually late, and on foot?"

"Why he has told you that he won't tell you," said Moss, "and so there's no use worrying yourself about it; he is neither going my way, westward, nor Apperton's way, eastward;—now as he is rather too old and too steady to go northward, I conclude he is going southward. But it is getting late, and our staying here will not get us a bit nearer the secret, so let's have the cold meat, Kittums, and the pickles, and the punch. I have had nothing since dinner, except my tea, and that, as the French Count says, is but wishy-washy stuff after all."

"Shall I go up to my father?" said Kate.

"Yes, if I were you, I would," said Apperton, "he may be unwell."

"Ring the bell, Mr. Moss," said she,—"order the supper, and I will be back directly."

Saying which, she proceeded up stairs to her father's bedchamber, and hearing a deep groan proceeding from within, rushed into the apartment. As her eyes met the objects it contained, a faint scream escaped her,—in an instant her father seized her hand, and led her from the room. He closed the door after him—without speaking he drew his daughter towards her dressing-room—they entered it—she, trembling with alarm and apprehension, held by the sofa to sustain herself.

"Katherine," said Maxwell, "what induced you to burst into my room after I had told you that I would myself ascertain the cause of the noise we heard,—was it curiosity?"

"No, no, my beloved father," said Miss Maxwell, "I was prompted by anxiety for you: we saw you were agitated."

"Who saw that?" said Maxwell.

"All of us," said Katherine.

"What, while I was in the drawing-room?" asked Maxwell.

"Yes."

"Well, never mind," said Maxwell, "you did not suspect the cause?"

"What cause?" said Kate.

"In short, you have *no* suspicions—you *know* nothing-have heard nothing?"

"No, my beloved father," said the agitated girl. "I lowed you to your room, fearing that you were unwell—v I reached the door I heard a groan——"

"—It was not *I* who groaned," said Maxwell. "Tel —again I ask,—you *know* nothing?"

"No, no," said Kate, "I know nothing—I wish to hea thing respecting the—"

"Hush! not a word," said Maxwell, "hear a father's so injunction—the ruin of one individual, the life of anothe pend upon your silence—your immutable silence as to you have just seen—you *know* nothing,—say nothing. day may come when you will know all. Now, mark me, —by your own precipitancy, founded as I firmly believe, o fection for your father, you have brought this restriction yourself. Let us return to the drawing-room,—let us as an air of composure: but let us get quit of our friends as as possible—before midnight it *must* be."

"But really," said Katherine, "what have I seen to tate you so deeply,—surely you are at liberty in your own l to—"

"—Not a word, not a syllable," again interrupted Max "Kate, dearest girl, you love me, fondly love me?"

"Need I answer such a question?" said Kate, hiding weeping eyes on her father's shoulder.

"Show that love for me, then," said Maxwell, "by alluding to the events of the last half hour,—not only n others, but never mention them to *me;* and never, never to gain an explanation of what you have witnessed,—pro me *that.*"

"Most solemnly I promise it," said Kate.

"The blessing of Heaven be upon you!" said her fath "come, come, come."

Saying which, he drew her arm under his, and taking u light, descended with his beloved child to the drawing-r where the servant was laying the cloth for the accustomed per, and Godfrey Moss was poising some oysters, previ to inserting them between the bars of the grate, a proce roasting such fish in which he was an adept, and of his terity in which, the worthy gentleman was particularly p

CHAPTER IV.

She has charmed thee like a syren,
With looks of love, and with enchanting sounds;
Too late the rocks and quicksands will appear,
When thou art wrecked upon the faithless shore
By following her delusion.

ROWE.

To the evening I have just described, or at least part of it, a
ght and morning of intense interest and anxiety to the house
Maxwell succeeded. Moss, having imbibed a sufficient
ntity of the "ginnums and water," as he called it, produced
segar and lighted it, and betook himself to his hotel. Ap-
on (having taken a private leave of his betrothed in the
drawing-room, where he went to look for something which
d not left there, and whither she followed him, to assist in a
iit which she knew went for nothing) bent his way to the
and Maxwell having seen his daughter safely to her cham-
lesired the servants to retire to rest, as he was obliged to
it late, and would take one of those portable keys which
ivants, and occasionally the professional members of mid-
life, find to be most admirable inventions for superseding
itting-up of domestics.
ter, therefore, the household of the surgeon had departed
ir repose, and just as he imagined them wrapped in slum-
sweet and sound, the head of the family went forth into
ide world on the mission to which he had only slightly
ed; but, whether it was of the delicate nature that Moss
pated, or of the critical character which Apperton appre-
d, it was not destined that his own establishment should
. His son had left town on a visit to the family of his
led, Miss Epsworth, accompanied by Major Overall, so
Katherine was left alone of the family to ruminate upon
she had seen, and on what she could scarcely fail to be-
the consequent nocturnal ramble of her esteemed father;
hen at nine o'clock the following morning, Kate disco-
that he had not returned home, her anxiety and distress
e better conceived than described.
n thousand fearful apprehensions filled her mind; Max-

well's agitation on the previous evening, his ardent desire to evade the inquiries, and get rid of the society of his *intimate* friends; his positive injunctions as to silence, added to *his* unprecedented absence from home without her knowledge of his destination, excited the greatest alarm in her anxious breast, and when Moss made his appearance at the breakfast-table, his observations upon the affair tended in no degree whatever to calm her agitation, or soothe her apprehensions.

Another hour elapsed, and still no Maxwell.

"What can have happened?" said Moss; "didn't he tell you *any thing* Kittums?"

"Not of the nature of his excursion," said Kate.

"Did he go out after you were all gone to bed?"

Kate answered in the affirmative.

"Ten to one, then, some mischief has occurred," said Moss. "Do the servants know nothing?—did nobody sit up for him?"

"No," said Kate, "he desired they might not—that he would let himself into the house on his return."

"Something's wrong, Kitty, I fear," said Moss, looking wistfully at the breakfast-table.

"My dear Mr. Moss, don't terrify me to death," said Kate; "what *can* have happened?"

"Impossible to say," sighed Moss; "but it is very extraordinary so regular a person—habits like clockwork—unless a poor patient, and a difficult case, and then he'd stay for a fortnight if he were wanted,—perhaps it is *that*,—at all events, Kittums, let's have breakfast; he will have breakfasted before this, wherever he is, and there's no use in waiting any longer."

Saying which, Godfrey used his acknowledged privilege, and rang the bell. Kate's anxiety hardly permitted her to know what was going on, and every moment she was running to the window, every sound of a footstep, or the stopping of a carriage excited her interest, and attracted her attention.

"But, Kate, what did he say to *you*, when you went upstairs to him last, and when he seemed so flurried?" said Moss.

"Ah!" said Kate, "that's the point which worries me most."

"Did he seem vexed, or angry?" asked Moss.

"No," said Kate. "He made me promise not to mention a word of that interview—but if by my silence I am keeping him in some situation of peril—yet—what good *could* I do, even if I told all!"

"All what, Kittums?" said Moss, who had begun to prepare his first meal for the day, with a carefulness and precision

indicative of a secondary feeling for his friend's safety—"there *is* a story then, is there—this toast isn't half brown enough—eh, Kittums ?"

"There certainly *is*," said Miss Maxwell, "but how that can be connected with my father's prolonged absence, or how the circumstance of which I am aware, could have caused this delay in his return, I know not."

"Tell me what it is," said Moss; "the butter, Kittums—what is it?"

"I dare not," said Kate, "I have promised my father to keep *secret* what I saw, and—"

"But if he is suffering in consequence," said Moss, "that's a pretty joke—this egg is hardly done enough—eh ?"

"How can he be suffering in consequence ?" said Kate.

"How can I tell," said Moss, "unless you tell me what you saw—concealment is all trash—nonsense—you promised not to tell, because your father desired you to do so; now you think telling may be of use to *him*, why of course you tell."

"If I could be sure that my telling what I saw," said Kate, could conduce to his speedy return, or even his safety abroad, you may be sure I would run the risk of disobeying *him*, for the sake of ensuring your advice in this emergency."

"Well, tell me, and let me judge," said Moss.

"I know not what to do," said Kate, her fears for her father's safety, and her anxiety for his preservation, acting vaguely and confusedly upon the force of the moral obligation to secrecy into which she had entered the night before—"I think I *will* tell *you*, Doctor," said she, "it will be best—you can then judge what we ought to do—I went up stairs to my father last night—"

"Well, that I know," said Moss; "a little bit more sugar, Kittums, and a drop more cream—yes—you went up stairs to your father—"

"And when I entered my father's room—somewhat abruptly, I beheld—— Oh! there he is! there he is!" exclaimed she, recognising his accustomed knock at the street door; "thank God, he is safe and well." Saying which she rushed into the hall, and was in her father's arms in a moment, leaving Moss, with his mouth full, and his ears open, as uninformed as Curtis, when Grumio cut him short of the many things of worthy memory, which were doomed to die in oblivion, and he return inexperienced to his grave.

"Why Mack—where have you been, old boy?" exclaimed Moss, as the surgeon entered the breakfast parlour.

"On business," said Maxwell; "you may rely upon it, f pleasure I should not willingly have staid so long from home.

"Ah, but we did not know you did stay willingly," sai Moss. "Have you breakfasted?"

"No," said Maxwell.

"Then we must have up heaps more eatables, Kittums,' said Moss. "I have finished the toast, and the butter, and th eggs. Well, and what have you been doing—putting som poor cretur out of his misery?"

"I hope so," said Maxwell.

"And what was you doing up-stairs last night, when Kittum bounced in upon you?" said Moss.

In an instant Maxwell's countenance lost its placidity, hi eyes glanced hastily and angrily on his daughter.

"Kate," said he, "have you told Moss what I bid you never mention?"

"Not she, Mack," said Moss, "but I'll be hanged if sh would not, if you hadn't knocked at the door just as you did If you had doddled him open with your little key, I should hav had the whole story out before you had got in; but you wer too much of a gentleman, I suppose, to let yourself in b daylight."

"In my anxiety," said Kate, "to account for your absence I think I should have been induced to violate my promise t *you*, sir, in order to have consulted the Doctor as to what wa best to be done; but—"

"Should have violated," said Maxwell, "did you violate it Kate?"

"No, father," said Kate.

"That's a good girl," said Maxwell, resuming his former ai of mildness and kindness; "not that there is any thing to tell that everybody in the world might not know; but as you pro mised me, I should have been vexed, and even angry, if yo had broken that promise."

"Psha—trash—gammon," said Moss, "nobody wants t know your secrets—some back-stairs warming-pan plot, I sup pose—some blot to be covered—some scrape to be hid;—com give me another cup of tea, I don't care a fig where you hav been. I'm deused glad you are come back safe and sound, fo one can't get a bit of breakfast in comfort, when the tea ma kers are fidgetty."

"Come, Doctor," said Kate, "you do yourself an injustice, a you always do, in denying your own feelings: you only pr

ended to care for your breakfast to divert my anxiety, and make light apparently of what I know worried you."

"No such thing, Miss," said Moss; "I am like the Jolly Miller they sing about in the play, who lived on the river Dee, I care for nobody, nobody cares for me.' "

"There, Moss," said Maxwell, "you do *us* as great a piece of injustice as you did yourself before. However, I shall go up to my room and lie down for an hour or two, for I am really tired."

"What, have you been up all night?" said Moss.

"Yes," said Maxwell, who seemed agitated and disturbed, even by the slightest reference to the events of the last twelve hours.

"Have you been far?" said Moss.

"A few miles."

"On foot?"

"Not exactly."

"Your boots are as muddy as if you had walked half over Lincolnshire," said Moss.

"Crossing the streets," replied the surgeon.

"What, clay in the streets?" said Moss.

"Never mind, Moss," said Maxwell. "I repeat what I have often said to you before—members of our profession are privileged; we are not expected to tell all we know."

"True," said Moss; "and it appears as if your family considered your privilege like that of the peerage—hereditary, for Kitty herself is as close as an oyster."

"And will remain so; of that I am quite sure," said Maxwell, "after her promise to me. Good morning, good folks, at luncheon we shall meet. Ned will be home, by dinner-time, from the country; Apperton will, of course, dine here; and I have asked two or three people to join us to make up a number."

"What! you don't repeat your nocturnal visit?" said Moss.

"Mousetrap! Mousetrap!" said Maxwell, "how often am I to tell you not to be inquisitive?"

"Now there goes that cretur," said Moss, as Maxwell left the room, "to get an hour or two's uncomfortable rest, after a sleepless night, devoted to some sick devil; pottering about in the mud and dirt, nobody knows where, all for a pound or two, when he has got already more than he knows what to do with."

"I don't think my dear father so very mercenary, either," said Kate.

"Mercenary!" cried the Doctor, "everybody is mercenary;

look into every thing—every pursuit, from the chimney-sweep to the cabinet minister, and you'll find six-and-eightpence the bottom of all their doings. I have said this all along, a one of the scribbling creturs who knows me, put it into one his books, and called me a cynic into the bargain."

"And I," said Kate—

"—called me a Mousetrap, Kittums," interupted Mos "but then you were a little toddling thing; and then I w fond of babies, and—I don't like 'em now, they make me sic and spoil conversation, and—but I forgot—I suppose you soon have some on'em to pester me with. I hope to G they'll take after their mother.

This pointed allusion to Kate's approaching nuptials, an the unequivocal expression of dislike towards her intended husband which it conveyed, drove the blushing bride elect ou of the breakfast parlour; leaving Mousetrap to spell the Morn ing Post, and read, as he did most sedulously, the hebdom adary which that popular paper presents on the Monday of eac succeeding week, and by which a man, at a glance, can pe ceive the very day and hour at which the moon is in perigee when the nightingale begins to sing; when the cuckoo pr claims the coming flowers; when Oxford and Cambrid terms commence; when snakes appear, and Joshua died. I the complicated lore of this useful compendium, Mousetra was erudite beyond measure, and to the enjoyment of hi study that way tending, we will leave him until the arriva of evening, and of the heir of the house of Maxwell, ha reassembled the whole of the family party in Burlingto Gardens.

Exercise, when recommended medicinally to a fat man—oliv to a young beginner—truffles to a novice—an aquatic excursio to belles from the inland counties, are nothing compared wi the feelings produceable by a continued effort to fancy one'se in love with some particular young lady, a marriage with who our friends and connexions have decided upon for us, and who fortune and station in society would be so particularly advan tageous; and it may safely be relied upon, that a positive a tipathy may sooner be conquered, than a passion fanned u out of such feelings as those which young Maxwell entertain for Miss Epsworth.

I would not describe Miss Epsworth for the world; for ha ing proclaimed her plain in person and uneven in temper, I descended to particulars, some of my suspicious female reade would not fail to put her cap upon their heads, and think

fitted uncommonly well. Suffice it to say, she was cold in manner, and unwholesome to look at—coarse in her tastes, and fine in her dress—her costume was regulated by the absurdities which appear every month in the magazines as records of fashions, being such things as never are worn, or ever could be seen any where out of Bedlam;—add to all her other defects, wayward pride and flippant conceit, founded upon her wealth (the old six and eight-penny basis of our friend, Mousetrap), and an openness to flattery so marvellous, and a credulity upon the point of her own attractions so incomprehensible, that even those who sought to win her were fearful of alarming her suspicions, while they scarcely satisfied her expectations; put all these amiable qualities together, and we have something like a portrait of the intended wife of Mr. Maxwell, junior.

But certainly, if at any period of their acquaintance the young gentleman had felt a distaste for the young lady, it was at the period to which we now refer, most considerably improved, not only by the events of the last few days during his *sejour* in the country, but by the occurrences of the last few hours in London; for it appeared that Ned (whether from the effect of contrast, or from the integral beauties of the new object, it was difficult to determine), had, since his arrival in town, lost at a *coup de main*, the stubborn heart which had so long resisted the advances of the wealthy Jane.

"Well, Master Ned," said Moss, beginning his attack the moment the family party were ranged at dinner, "what did you do down at Dullham House—hard work to get through the day, eh?"

"No," said Ned; "I didn't find it very bad—after breakfast we did as we liked till half past one."

"Ah! that is, did nothing," said Moss;—"went and washed a dog in a pond; looked at a hen's nest; saw a half a dozen horses' tails sticking out of their stalls in the stables; squashed about the brown sugar walks in the dripping shrubberies; sat on the bridge; looked at the water; saw how sticks swim; admired a calf; proposed sparrow shooting; no gun at hand; thought of a walk in the kitchen garden—gate locked; wanted to look at the grapery—gardener gone to buy pea sticks. I know—well, poor deluded creturs, and what after *that?*"

"Why, after *that*," said Ned, "(if you mean after what never occurred) came luncheon; after luncheon our horses and the carriages were ordered—Miss Epsworth and her aunt

used to drive in the phaeton, and I and Overall, and one or two others, used to ride."

"What have you done with the Major?" said Maxwell.

"He is there, sir," said Edward.

"What, at Dullham?"

"Yes," said Ned.

"To be sure he is," said Moss.

"I think," said Apperton, "he has an eye to the freehold, and the copyhold, and the leasehold; the India stock, and the three per cent. consols."

"As sure as a gun," said Moss, "that lying little cretur *will* snap up your Jenny, Master Ned; he'll carry off your *little* ricketty vinegar bottle, if you don't look sharp."

"I cannot help it," said Edward; "and if he do, I don't much care."

"What!" exclaimed Kate, "a lover, and speak so of your beloved?"

"I am no lover, Kate," replied her brother; "at least not of hers."

"Hallo!" said his father, "what, is your heart going another way?"

"Going, sir?" said Edward.

"Gone, I think," said Kitty.

"That is nonsense," said Edward; "but I honestly confess, I never *did* see such a lovely creature in the whole course of my existence as one I saw to-day, and whose life I saved."

"Oh! a romantic affair," said Moss. "Where did 'um happen, Master Neddums?"

"In—Long-Acre,—" said Edward, after a little hesitation.

"What a scene for a romance!" said Kate.

"Was she very pretty, Ned?" asked his father,—"tell us your story."

"Why, sir," said the son, "at the corner of Long-Acre, a carriage driving furiously along, and unseen by her, was within an inch of running over this beautiful girl. I luckily, and most luckily, as I hadn't been in town half an hour, and was coming homewards from Lincoln's Inn, rushed between *her*, and the horses, seized the bridle of the off horse with one hand, and catching the lovely creature round the waist with the other, succeeded in rescuing her from what must otherwise have been certain death.

"And a very meritorious act too, Ned," said Maxwell. "No accident *did* happen to her, I hope?"

"No job for the craft," said Moss; "no feeling for the faculty—eh?—six and eight-pence again, Kittums."

"No, sir," said Edward, "she was, as they say, more frightened than hurt; but she was all gratitude to me,—and called me her deliverer."

"Mistook you for your father, perhaps, Neddums," said Moss.

"She gave you her address—a reference, I conclude," said Apperton.

"No," said Edward, and sighed.

"He's a young chap yet," said Moss, *sotto voce*, to the stockbroker; "does she live in Drury-lane, Ned?"

"Where she lives, I know not," said the young man. "I begged leave to see her home, but she strenuously declined; I inquired her residence—she would not tell me—she requested me to call a hackney-coach—I did so—handed her in—"

"And left her in the straw without further inquiry?" asked Moss.

"*I did* inquire again and again," said young Maxwell, "but to *no purpose*. She thanked me a thousand times: but entreated me, in accepting those thanks, to add to her obligations by not endeavouring to discover whither she went; and I—"

"Of course got up behind the coach and traced her," said Moss.

"No, Mr. Moss," said Edward, "I did not. I gave her my honour I would conform myself to her wishes; she told me her reasons were important, and imperious—I believed her assertions, and obeyed her injunctions."

"And you behaved like a gentleman and a man of honour, Ned," said his father; "but was she very handsome?"

"Lovely, perfectly lovely," said Edward.

"I thought," said Kate, "that you did not prefer such lovely persons, Edward?"

"Perhaps, Kate," said Ned, "I should rather call it loveable. I have no taste for your regular, systematic, Grecian nosed, short lipped, classical one, two, three regulation beauties, as you know; but this creature had eyes full of intelligence and feeling, and a mouth which when she smiled—"

"Oh! stuff, Ned!" said Moss, "here stockbroker, give me some snuff. I used to talk that sort of trash when I was at your time of life, but—"

"Nay," said Maxwell, "when you did talk it, I have no doubt you thought it very agreeable."

"What added to the interest this charming girl inspired," said Ned, "was her dress."

"Cocquelot, hat and hair to match?" said Moss.

"No," said Edward, "she was dressed in the deepest mourning."

"Black saves washing," said Mr. Apperton.

"She had that within, which passeth show," said Edward, "there was a plaintive melancholy in her eye—"

"Oh, Ned, Ned," said Moss, "if you go on so, I must have up the gin and water an hour earlier than usual."

"It is very curious," said the stockbroker, "to observe *how* the most sensible characters are imposed upon. There *was* myself—"

"——what, by way of an example," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of Apperton's snuff.

"Yes, *exempli gratia*—"

"——as the Dutch say," continued Mousetrap.

"Come, come, Mousetrap," said Maxwell, "let Apperton tell his story, and then we will have some loo—and Kitty shall say to you and Pam together, pray be civil."

"Oh, civil," said Moss, "I'm civil enough, but I've no patience with all this pottering about runaway horses and run-over women—pish!—the creturs put themselves there on purpose to be run over, or run away with. Come, Kittums—put away your netting—making a purse for the stockbroker boy, —eh?"

"I was making it for *you*," said Kate.

"Not a bit of it," said Moss,—"I hav'n't no need of purses—no—no—Apperton's the boy—those high-stool chaps, with the desks, and the rails, and the stove, and the slits in the panels for the bills, eh, Apperton? that's the way we does 'em in Copthall-court, or wherever your Potamaboo place is. Come along, then, let's see you play your loo."

"What, will you play?" said Maxwell.

"Not I," said Moss: "I can't understand that stationary work; but as we ar'n't to have any music, let's see you do the Great Mogul foolery."

And accordingly they sat down to what some of the party considered a relaxation from severer occupation; what others felt to be a simply hazardous investment of money on a small scale; what some endeavoured to find oblivion to their thoughts in the pursuit of; and what two juvenile appendages to the circle, in the shape of pale-faced pupils, considered as extremely

nusing, rather improper, and very *exciting*, seeing that they layed five card loo, with fish at two shillings per dozen.

Neither the intricacy, nor the importance, nor the interest of ne game, however, could recall the thoughts, or attract the attention of Edward Maxwell from the all absorbing object of his resent contemplation. He had, indeed, seen a lovely creature, lovely in all personal attractions, and still more beautiful and pure in her mind. He had saved her life—her heart overflowed with gratitude for the courage and readiness which he *had displayed* in her rescue. Young Maxwell's person—(and *and is* the certainty to gentlemen of plain appearance and ungainly figure, to know that personal attractions *have* their influence, especially on first acquaintance,)—young Maxwell's person was extremely good, his countenance was intelligent and animated, and constantly affected by the workings of his mind. This, in addition to his unaffected, gentleman-like manners, and the genuine ardour with which he first preserved the beautiful girl from destruction, and then followed up his activity in her rescue by his solicitude for her tranquillity, and his assurances of obedience to her almost unreasonable refusal to give him any information of her name or residence, had, I have reason to know—how, it is impossible to tell—produced their due effect upon the heart of the mourning fair one.

Edward, however, pledged as he felt himself not to pursue the bright vision which had flashed across him and so quickly faded away, held that her injunctions only went to prevent his following her upon *that* occasion, and certainly could not refer to any future experiments which he might be inclined to make, in the way of falling in with her *accidentally*. The fact of her being alone, and in no very aristocratic part of the town, unattended by a servant, proved that in point of rank or fortune she stood not much above himself: and the circumstance of her perambulating the streets one day in the week so unattended, led him to the conclusion that she might be caught wandering in a similar manner some other day. The best chance he seemed to have, would be to hover about the neighbourhood in which he had first encountered her; and although he crossing from Drury-lane to Long-Acre seems, as Miss Maxwell said, a somewhat unromantic haunt for the thoughts r the person of a sighing lover, still the breakfast of the following morning had scarcely disappeared before the gentle Adonis, rejecting the retirement of Diveandpore's sunken study, might have been seen oscillating between the pastry cook's in Queen-Street and the clothes' shop opposite.

There he wandered like a troubled spirit—gazing in all *direc* tions—lingering and looking; sometimes varying the *dulness* of his occupation by reading the declarations of the efficacy of Mr. Basil Burchell's wonderful anodyne necklaces, and examining the well-preserved results of Dr. Gardiner's incomparable vermifuge; sadly divided between love and lassitude: until after a delay long past what he imagined might be the accustomed hour of his divinity's visit to those parts, he sauntered, with the sun in his eyes, towards the western quarter o London, still looking in every direction for the wished *for* object of his speculation.

But, alas! his hopes were vain, his pursuits fruitless! *and* when he returned to dress for dinner, jaded, tired, and vexed, he began to feel more seriously than ever, the violence of the passion with which the bright eyes of his incognita had inspired his young heart.

To the sedate, the serious, and the more advanced reader, this painful result of a momentary glance may appear somewhat overstrained. But no, at Edward's time of life, the effect was natural, the wound began to rankle, and to the first glow of fancy succeeded an aching desire again to behold the fair creature whose features were constantly before his eyes. Restlessness and vexation, even to tears, at his loss; self-reproach at the thoughtlessness which could have permitted her so entirely to escape him; and a something, too, like regret at the punctiliousness of his own honour, which had induced him to observe his promise with a strictness she herself might despise him for, all combined to worry, agitate, and torment the lovesick youth.

His passion had, in four-and-twenty hours, effected a complete revolution in his mind. His once loved home became irksome to him; he could not endure meeting his own family at dinner; the placid happiness of his sister and her lover distressed him; and as for Moss, he hated him and his satirical jokes with all the fervour of his heart;—in short, nothing could soothe, nothing could amuse, nothing could interest him, and he resolved to dine alone at some distant coffee-house, and endeavour to divert his thoughts by varying the scene, while he still pursued the object of his hopes and wishes by perambulating in various directions the vast metropolis and its environs. The success attendant upon this determination remains to be developed.

CHAPTER V.

"She doth stray about by holy crosses."
SHAKSPEARE.

The lectures were fast proceeding, but Edward still remained unsatisfied as to his transient beauty. He must, however, for a moment, be left playing bo-peep with his Long-Acre Hebe, while the reader's attention is attracted to the measures in progress with respect to the marriage of the stockbroker and Katherine Maxwell.

The affair was now no longer a secret, no more was it mentioned in whispers, no more referred to in *innuendoes*, or hinted at in half-murmured sentences. Milliners and mantua-makers had been called into council, bride's-maids had been nominated, their several and various merits discussed, and their eligibility canvassed. Nay, Apperton himself had gone the length of visiting the King-street bazaar to select a second-hand carriage, (number 348) yellow body, drab lining, (a little soiled) with scarlet wheels, picked out black, wherein to carry off the idol of his soul, after the auspicious ceremony had been performed which was to confer upon him the mastery of her hand, and—her fifteen thousand pounds, three per cent. consols.

Moss had a brother who partook considerably of the family failing—a strong affection for grog and segars, and who was rector of Fudley-cum-Pipes, in the county of Lincolnshire, a orthodox divine in his way, and perhaps more addicted to oosery than he would have been in a less humid county than hat which it was his fortune to inhabit. To *him* was to be intrusted the agreeable duty of uniting the philosophical lovers, r as Apperton called it, "establishing the firm;" and to *him* ven had the writ of summons been issued; so that things ere actually in extremities, and all the interested parties on e very tip-toe of expectation.

It had been at one time proposed that Edward's marriage ith Miss Epsworth should take place on the same day with at of his sister. But however indifferent the elder couple ight appear as to the consummation of all their earthly hopes nd wishes, the youngest lover of the party seemed not only different as to the time *when* he was to call the wealthy girl

his own, but since the appearance of the sable vision in Drury lane almost positively opposed to the conclusion of the *match* at any period whatever: but as it turned out in the sequel, he was not doomed to languish for ever in despair on the subject of his beautiful *incognita*.

After a ten days' patrolling of London, just as he was crossing Piccadilly from the end of Halfmoon-street to the Green-Park gate, his eye suddenly fell on the long desired, long looked for object. The lady at the same moment saw, and evidently recognised her anxious admirer, and instantly huddling down her veil, passed into the park, and greatly increased her rate of walking; but Edward borrowed the wings of Love, and in a few seconds was at her side.

"Have I found you at last?" said he: "this meeting repays me for all the anxiety I have suffered since we parted, and the unceasing search I have made to behold you again."

"It would be affectation in me," said the young lady, hesitatingly, and in broken accents, "to deny the recollection of my deliverer from danger; but the same motives which induced me to trust to your honour the last time I saw you, not to endeavour to trace my residence, compel me now to entreat you to leave me immediately."

"I have once sinned by obeying you," said Edward; "you were then suffering under agitation of mind and great alarm, and I myself was considerably flurried by the circumstances of your accident and escape. I *then* certainly made a promise, and I have kept it—but I made it only for that once."

"And how you have kept it," said the stranger, "I do not exactly understand, since you have just said that I have been the object of your unremitted search ever since."

"I confess," said Maxwell, "that I have never until this moment ceased repenting my rash promise; and it is not very likely that I should again commit an error, which has already caused me so much pain and annoyance."

"I am sure, sir," said the lovely girl, raising from the ground a pair of eyes full of expression and anxiety, "I am quite sure you would not wish to make me eternally miserable; and I will be candid enough to tell you, that your success in discovering my name and residence would be nothing short of destruction to me."

"What?" said Edward, "a cruel, tyrannical mother, or savage maiden aunt? a vindictive father, or a persecuting brother?"

"I have no such relations," said the stranger; "I never

my mother; I *have* a brother, indeed, but he is far, far
"

nen in what way can my knowledge of your name and
nce so seriously involve your peace or comfort?" asked
rd.

Why really," replied the young lady, smiling, "one is not
habit of making confidences upon such very short ac-
tance, nor am I accustomed to favour perfect strangers
my history at sight."

I do not consider myself a perfect stranger," said Max-
rather piqued; "I flattered myself that I had some little
to your friendship, and—"

-Indeed you have," interrupted his companion. "I was
; I spoke flippantly—foolishly. I am grateful, most
ul to you, but it is impossible, utterly impossible, to per-
ir acquaintance to continue; indeed, I must entreat you
t me at this very moment—here we are in the Park;
one may see me who knows me, and—"

-Well, and what then?" said Maxwell. "I assure you
is nothing so very killing against my character in the
, that you need tremble at an association with me, even in
ost public place. I honestly confess, with a candour I
l rejoice in finding reciprocal, that it is the most earnest
f my heart to continue to improve the acquaintance be-
us, which accident has so curiously originated. I am
tly serious when I tell you that my whole mind has been
ied by the thoughts of you ever since we parted, and
feel my happiness to depend entirely upon the permis-
which I request to be introduced to your family."

My family!" said the young lady, whose eyes filled with
at the word. "God help me, sir, you little know the
ies of her whom you are addressing. I tell you at once,
you desire candour, that you must utterly and entirely
me from your thoughts, for your own sake if not for
—I am to be shunned and avoided."

cannot imagine the necessity of such a course of con-
on either of our parts," said Edward. "A being all
y, and softness, and grace, like you, to be shunned—no
en to me—for Heaven's sake hear me—"

Well," said she, "speak quickly; we must part imme-
y. I repeat to you I am known here. What—what is
would say?"

would tell you that my views and feelings," said Edward,
fair and honourable; that all the admiration I felt before,

is heightened and increased by this second meeting; that the peculiarity and difficulty of your situation as you describe it, add, if possible, to the interest with which you have inspired me. In order to claim your confidence, I shall in the first place declare myself to you, my name, my station in society, and my expectations. I am—"

"—Hush, hush!" whispered the young lady, "here's some one coming I know—leave me, leave me—pray, pray leave me; at least for a few moments."

Edward, awed by her energetic manner, and fascinated by her sweet expression of countenance, obeyed, and let her pass on. A man of the shabbiest possible appearance approached and spoke to the fair object of his affections; they appeared to converse familiarly—to Edward's horror and surprise, the man turned about and walked *with* her, and that too apparently by her invitation. She never raised her head, nor looked to see if Edward followed, which as she might have concluded, he did. They proceeded down the Park, and through the passage at Spring Gardens,—still Edward followed at a *respectful* distance—they crossed the street—they entered the yard of the Golden Cross, at Charing-cross—still Edward followed, until having passed the gateway, he suddenly missed the fair object of his adoration, but encountered the man.

"Are you looking for that young lady, sir?" said the man.

"What young lady?" said Edward, somewhat taken aback by the address.

"The young lady in black?" said the man.

"Why—yes, yes, I am," replied Maxwell.

"She'll be out in a minute or two, sir?" said the fellow.

"She will?" said Edward, and thought he saw something of a connivance between them, and began to think the beautiful vision not quite so admirable as she had struck him to be before that little affair took place. But then her manner—her conversation—her tears.

"Pray," said Edward, "what is the young lady's name?"

"I can't say, sir?" said the man.

"Is there nothing will prevail upon you to tell me—" said Edward, at the same moment preparing to produce his purse.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," continued the fellow; "if you'll wait here two minutes, I'll fetch her, and she shall tell you herself."

"Do you think she will?" said Maxwell.

"Rely upon *me*," said the man. "*If I* bring her to you, she'll not hesitate to tell you her name, and where she lives."

Saying which the man proceeded to produce the fair lady. Edward waited their return with considerable patience, but nobody appeared. He then walked up the yard—saw nobody like either his male *friend*, or his female acquaintance—looked into the different coach offices—not there; peered into the windows of a tap-room, pried into the Times Brighton coach, just on the point of starting, and then returned towards the gate-way.

"Are you looking for any body, sir?" said one of those nondescript idlers who are always lingering about such places.

"Yes," said Edward; "I am looking for the man I was speaking to just now."

"Oh! he's gone through the gate in St. Martin's Lane," said the man.

"*Who* is he?" asked Edward, thinking to get a clue.

"*He's one* of the traps as belongs to Union Hall."

"A what?" said Edward.

"He's a hofficer," said the man.

Edward was more puzzled than before; it seemed certainly as if the lady with whom he was walking had recognised this fellow as an acquaintance, or else it would appear that she had put herself under his protection to secure herself from the advances of her pursuer; but then it seemed such an extraordinary piece of cunning to bring her in at one gate of the inn, and let her out at another. He was convinced that his charmer must be in the house—that she was anxious, as she had said she was, to avoid him, and had engaged this minion of the law to aid her escape from *him*. It was quite evident she must be some beautiful creature from the country, ill used by her family, and living for the present at the Golden Cross, Charing-cross.

Edward having got this clue, determined to follow it up. He was now convinced that he had housed his fair one; accordingly he proceeded into the coffee-room, ordering some hot nastiness, which in such places is called soup, he began to make a sort of acquaintance with a very respectable looking waiter, upon whose prudence and sagacity he thought he could rely, and having paid for his mess, and made a donation to the waiter of more than double its value, he, in a half whisper, inquired whether there was a lady staying in the house, who

wore deep mourning—whether she was living there alone, had a father, or mother, or brother, or uncle, or au with her.

The question succeeded to a miracle—there *was* a lady i mourning—she *had* been out walking—had just befor returned—she came from the country, and her name wa Scrimshaw.

"How long has she been here?" said Edward.

"About a fortnight or rather better, perhaps," said th waiter; "she generally goes out to walk in the forenoon, i the Park, I think, and then she comes in and has a mutto chop or two, and some pickles and porter, for luncheon, an then lies down till dinnertime; but she has no living creature here with her, she pays her bill every Saturday, and in that case you see, sir, we make it a point never to ask any superfluous questions."

"Scrimshaw—porter—pickles—sleeps till dinner. Umph thank you," said Edward; "I was very curious to know wh she was."

"Why, sir, so are we," said the waiter. "She's uncommo good natured to all the servants; she did bring a sort of ma of her own, but she has discharged her; and what she to my missis is, that she is waiting here for some gentleman as s expects somewhere out of the country."

"Enough—get me a bottle of soda water," said Edwar resolved to make this order the medium for an increased large to the waiter.

The command was obeyed—the soda water swallow the waiter remunerated, and Edward again in the street in f minutes.

It is difficult to describe the satisfaction of the ardent a anxious young man at having discovered, by his own excess prudence, the retreat of the fair *incognita;* although it m be confessed there were some drawbacks to the pleasure he rived from the knowledge he had acquired. In the first pl there was something strange in a beautiful girl living alone a London inn, without servants; something more strange her having dismissed the only attendant she had; someth very odd in her living two or three weeks alone and unattend and something more odd yet, in her familiar association wit police officer. The episodical account of the mutton ch and porter for luncheon, rather spoiled the sentimentality the affair; but *then*, perhaps, she was consumptive, and been recommended, upon the new system, to eat mutton ch

nd drink porter; and besides, luncheon was the principal neal of ladies; and besides, perhaps every lady ate mutton chops and drank porter for luncheon, but nobody knew it, because they did not feed under the inspection of bribeable waiters.

His plan, however, was very speedily resolved upon: whatever objections she might have to being seen in his company in public, or whatever delicacy she might feel with regard to disclosures respecting her family in conversation, a letter addressed to her might gain her confidence, and she might be *induced*, in writing, to disclose circumstances of which her *innate* delicacy would forbid her to speak.

The minutes seemed hours until the anxious young man was seated in his study, with the materials for writing before him. "His eye in a fine phrensy rolling," and every thing actually in progress for opening the correspondence; with a flushed cheek, and a trembling hand, he wrote as follows:

"*Tuesday.*

"That I have discovered your retreat, after all the precautions you adopted, may prove to you, at least, that I am not easily baffled, nor inclined to give up one upon whose attention circumstances have conspired to give me, at least, a fair claim. You, no doubt, thought by your manœuvres with your friend the officer—you see I know every thing—to evade my vigilance; but you have failed, and I do not hesitate to throw myself upon your good feelings—upon your justice—if I may not claim any warmer sentiment, to ask you whether I deserve the conduct you have thought proper to adopt, or whether I should be the meanest of God's creatures to surrender, after what has occurred, one to whom I honestly and candidly admit myself to have been devoted ever since I first became acquainted with her.

"Young as I am, I think I know enough of the world not to build my hopes of happiness upon so sandy a foundation as mere personal appearance. The attractions of beauty alone would have failed to hold me, did I not know that in her I so ardently admire, there exists a more permanent power over my feelings and affection than the mere external advantages of person could ever possess. It is true my acquaintance with you is not of a nature to warrant this sort of address; but in what manner else can I endeavour to avert a blow which will destroy my future comfort? How else check you in a course of proceeding which you seem resolved to adopt? How else

assert my claim to a heart, which, if I know myself, I have d served to possess.

"As candour is, in *my* mind, a virtue of the first quality, shall not hesitate at once to avow myself; feeling assured when you revolve all the circumstances of the case, you will not hesitate to do me justice. Had I a desire to entrap you into any disclosures which it might be disagreeable to you to make, I might pursue a different course—follow your steps—watch your proceedings—and at last come forward in a much more questionable shape; but I seek to take no advantage of you. By whatever circumstances you may have been induced to act towards me as you have done, I do not impeach *your* motives. Your acquaintance with me is not perhaps such as to have interested you in my behalf; still, I repeat, I am resolved to be candid—to announce to you, in my proper person and character, the knowledge I have gained of your residence in town, and my determination, by every fair and honourable means in my power, to attain the object of my hopes and wishes upon a point the most important in human life.

"If you are surprised at the absence of passion in this appeal, you should recollect that the more deeply rooted feeling is, the less effect it produces externally—shallow brooks ripple loudly over the pebbles, but the deep stream runs silently. Let me entreat you, then, write to me one line expressive of your determination—appoint some spot to meet me, if you consider your inn an inconvenient place; or, if you think I may there encounter the friend *whom you expect from the country*—you see I know all—ay, ever since your arrival, even up to the dismissal of your attendant—so disguise with me is useless. Again I entreat you to consider my feelings, and the suspense in which I must remain till I hear from you; and believe me yours,

"EDWARD MAXWELL."

"———*Street*,
"*Burlington Gardens*."

Edward read and re-read this epistle, which did not at a satisfy him as to the warmth of its expression: but he reasone upon its apparent coolness thus: If the young lady wer inclined to favour his suit, the modesty and candour of h avowal were quite sufficient to extract a confession: whi if, on the other hand, she chose to repel him roughly, and pe haps exhibit his effusion to her expected friend from t country, it would be wise not to add a new folio to that scho

amatory literature, specimens of which are occasionally ought before the public, in the course of those unreadable ials to which the eyes of the world are constantly directed in ie public newspapers.

In less than ten minutes, Edward's servant was despatched o the Golden Cross; and before dinner was announced, the ardent lover had the satisfaction to know that his appeal was safely lodged in the hands of the gentle Scrimshaw, a name which, being the only objectionable quality of the lady as far as he yet knew, he felt particularly anxious to change as soon as possible.

To the family circle at Maxwell's the only addition was the clerical brother of the humorist Moss, who had arrived in the metropolis preparatory to the performance of the sacred duty of uniting the lovers. It was in vain for Edward to attempt to conceal from Kitty, his success with respect to Miss Scrimshaw; and, by degrees, before the evening was half over, his secret was told to his sister, under a strict promise not to divulge the particulars; a promise which she, who, to say truth, had never entertaind any very great regard for the wealthy Miss Epsworth, intended most religiously to keep. However, between nine and ten o'clock, a letter was delivered to Edward, luckily just at a period when his excellent parent was most attentively carrying on his rubber of whist, so that the trepidation and confusion, caused by the arrival of that which the anxious youth truly anticipated was a communication from his fair correspondent, were not perceived by that exemplary personage. It was in vain to attempt to open or read an answer so important, and so fraught with interest, as this must unquestionably be, in the society of others. He therefore hastily jumped up, and lighting a chamber candle (the family lights being always arranged on a small table, just within the front drawing-room), flew up stairs to his dressing-room, where, with devouring eyes, he read what follows:—

"Sir,

"I am quite sewer you will exquese me for wot has hapened, when I explain my forloun sityation—nothink helse wood hav induced me to hackt as I haf dun, for what you say about the clam upon a hart which ort by wrights to be your hone, is as true as Jospell; but one is not hallways uns own missuss, so that is the playing truth on it.

"Your noshuns of booty has ad nothink to do with the rites of it, and if the hofficer you spekes of had not greater hole of

me than mear pursewashun, I shod not haf thote of cummin here. The minuet I seed your name I thout I shoed hav *dyde* because such honorable conduk I do not think I desarve, *how*-somever you nose best, althow how you got sent of my cumming into thes house I dont now, for I tuck every pawsable preckaution not to be diskevered while I was weighting in toone for one wich, it brakes my hart to now, is your rifle.

"I trust you will due nothun desprut, and I will hopen my art to you, for I am by natur candied, and will explayn how it hall hapened that I was engagged at all; meanwile, if *you* please to say at wot our I may kall at your farther's *ouse or* elsewere, I will kontrive so has to kip my apointmeant *let kum* wot wil, for I never has repinted but once wot I haf *onderta*kein, so in hops to ear from you in coarse two morrow,

"I rest yewers,

"Humbelly,

"MARTHA SCRIMSHAW.

"Mr. Edward Maxwell, Esq."

The charms of magic are said to be dissolved, if a word is spoken; certain it is that the charms of Miss Patty Scrimshaw were most surprisingly dissipated by the words she had written. Edward re-read the strange letter—threw it down—then took it up again—and at last burst into an immoderate fit of laughter; not that he held fine writing to be an essential in matters of love; but in the sort of connexion he had proposed to the beautiful girl, certainly something more like general accomplishment was, if not absolutely necessary, at least extremely desirable.

The thing, indeed, struck him to be so absurd, and so nearly impossible into the bargain, that he would not have hesitated a moment in deciding that there had been some mistake in the delivery of his letter, but that his fair correspondent referred, point by point, to his appeal to her, and recalled the circumstances as they had actually occurred, even to his claim upon her heart, and to her contrivance, in conjunction with the officer, to evade his search.

Ned was puzzled—he was ashamed to disclose the whole of the affair to his sister, who was generally his counsellor in matters of the heart—none of which, however, in which she had been asked for advice before, had gone the length of a correspondence, and he could not bear to admit that this very poor attempt at literature should be exhibited, as coming from a creature about whose delicacy, grace, and eloquence he ha

en so long raving. His course was very soon determined on. He, like many other persons much older and wiser, ad been dazzled and deceived by appearances. His object ad been a fair and honourable proposal to a lovely, and, as he aturally imagined, a highly accomplished person—he had cted upon his feelings—he had opened a channel of communication in his own name—and if he had not conducted himself with quite so much prudence and caution as an older man would have done, still he had compromised neither his own *honour*, nor the young lady's delicacy. She, it appeared by *her own* admission, was expecting a favoured lover, so that it was rather an alleviation of his regret, than otherwise, that he had furnished so strong a written evidence of her own unfitness for the sphere of society in which, as his wife, she would have been destined to move. To act dishonourably by the dear confiding creature never entered his head, although her extraordinary willingness to grant him a meeting so soon as she had ascertained that he was of a certain rank and standing in society, and so soon after her decided refusal of a continuance of their acquaintance, gave him a confused idea that she was not altogether so very correct as he at first thought; and he recurred to Moss's satirical observations upon the whole adventure, with the feeling which very often accompanied similar references, that, after all, nobody knew the world better than Mr. Godfrey Moss.

Under all the circumstances, he resolved to cut the connexion at a blow—to decline the visit—to admit the superior claims of the expected Romeo—and to take a desperate measure in order to rid himself at once of an entanglement out of which, however much he might admire the personal attractions of Miss Scrimshaw, he plainly saw he could not otherwise come fairly, clearly, and honourably; and accordingly, without farther consultation or consideration, he wrote a note full of extraordinary civility, stating that he was unfortunately obliged to leave London; and as the young lady had, in her letter, been so clear and explicit, he thought it would be better for both their sakes that they should not expose themselves to the needless ordeal of a meeting, from which no ulterior good could accrue to either; and having sealed and directed his brief, but pithy epistle, he rang his bell, and delivering it to his servant, ordered him to carry it forthwith to the inn, and on no account to wait for an answer.

Having concluded this business, he hastily deposited the gentle Martha's delicate epistle in his writing-desk, and re-

paired to the drawing-room, where a consciousness of the *sort* of work he had been doing, carried his eyes direct to the expressive countenance of his sister Katherine, who was sitting on the sofa, working, during the rubber in which the Mosses, her father, and Apperton were engaged, looking so calm and so placid, and so very easy in her mind, that nobody who saw her would have guessed her wedding-day to have been so very near at hand.

But if Katherine appeared thus indifferent to matters which so nearly and vitally concerned herself, she was perfectly alive to the emotions by which she saw her brother affected. *The* moment he returned to the room, she was convinced *that he* had received some intelligence respecting his fair *incognita*.

"Well, Edward," said she, as he placed himself beside her on the sofa,—"any news of the fugitive?"

"Enough, dear Kate," replied he, "to satisfy me of the utter folly of farther pursuit; and so let me beg of you never to recur to a subject, the discussion of which can only serve to prove the blindness of youthful love, and a woful want of experience on the part of your poor simple-minded brother."

"The latter part of your position, I am ready to admit, Ned," said Miss Maxwell, "but the former, I—"

"What, Kitty,—thinking of——?"

"Edward," said Miss Maxwell, with a look of indescribable anguish,—"never, never, as you value my happiness, allude to *that* person or any subject with which he is connected."

"Well, a bargain then," cried Edward;—"*you* never mention my wild goose chase after my Dulcinea of Drury-lane."

"What bargains are you making, Master Neddums?" said Moss, taking snuff, while his brother was dealing;—"I wish you'd ring the bell, and ask for something to drink."

"What, drink again?" said Maxwell, "fearless of consequences."

"He gets a good lesson here," said the clerical Moss;—"there are no race of people in the world who eat and drink half so much as you surgeons and physicians."

"But we are like the fire-eaters at fairs," said Maxwell,—"we have our antidotes and preventives."

"Ah, well, Mack," said the lay Moss,—"a few drops more or less, now, will make no difference; and it's of no use to make an old man miserable by way of lengthening his days."

"Every glass of spirits," said Apperton, "is a nail in your coffin."

"Well, and what then, stockbroker?" replied the advocate of grog;—"the more nails in my coffin, the smarter my funeral. I can't help it;—come, Kittums, dear, mix me some ginnums and water, and let's see what's trumps. I shan't have you long to brew for me."

"I assure you, Doctor," said Apperton,—"you shall have the advantage of her abilities that way, so long as you choose to patronize her manufacture."

"Thank you, thank you," said Moss. "Well, where are the cards? Oh, Maxwell cuts,—to be sure he's used to it;" saying which, Moss received from the fair hand of his Hebe a glass of his favourite potation, the strength of which the innocent colour of the spirit did not betray. Placing it beside him, among his counters, he proceeded with his game, much more placidly than before.

"Kate," said Edward, joining her again on the sofa, "I have at length made up my mind to the deciding measure of my life.—I have determined upon ending a short life of romance by obeying my father's wishes, and marrying Jane."

"Why, this is marvellous," said Kate; "after the continued confidential expressions of your distaste for Miss Epsworth, now all at once to resolve to unite yourself to her eternally."

"Sometimes these things are more matter of convenience than choice," said Edward.

"Why, yes,—that," replied his sister, in a rather confused manner,—"that is very true, I admit."

"And if, Kate," continued he, "a man cannot marry the only person in the world he really loves, and yet it is thought desirable that a marriage should take place, why, to me—at least at my time of life—it seems a matter of perfect indifference who is to be the person."

"You are cruel to your sister, Edward," said Katherine, "for the sake of showing your perception, and perhaps your wit. It is perhaps enough to gratify your vanity to tell you that I sensibly feel the force of your allusion, but my situation is wholly different from yours.—I follow the wishes of a parent in taking a step which is in itself, as you know, at least a matter of indifference to me, yet I shall ever be found doing my duty, and exerting myself for the happiness and respectability of my husband:—with you—"

"With me, Kate," interrupted her brother,—"how is it?—I have always been considered the future husband of my

distant relative, Miss Epsworth. I have no positive objecti to her, but I felt I never could love her enthusiastically, *or w* that devotion which I, like *you*, believe to be essential to wh Apperton in his mercantile jargon would call happines 'first class A,' and therefore I would rather have avoided union with a girl, who never could command all my affectio Since I felt this, I have accidentally seen a being whose beau and manners have taken such full and entire possession of n that my heart never can be entirely any woman's except h —with *her* all further acquaintance must cease, and the fi hope of my life in the way of love is blighted. Can you n then sympathize with me, when, feeling as I feel, I would no rather do that which will gratify my family and connexions b marrying as they wish, than give my divided affections to som object less desirable in their eyes?"

"Don't speak so loud," said Kate, perceiving that Mos with his glass in his hand—his drinking glass—had fixed hi eyes upon them with an expression perfectly intelligible to *her* and as she surmised had overheard some part of this curiou disquisition upon the delicate separation of rapturous love an prudential affection——

"We are both strangely situated," said Katherine, softly,— "but you, Edward, far differently from me—you are younger —you have the world before you—and you are free. I have been addressed by a man, of whom all who know him speak well and highly, whose professional character and rectitude are the theme of universal praise; he is past that period of life which you have hardly attained, and seeks to enjoy a rational existence with a companion whom he has flattered with his affection and esteem—but you—"

"I—I, Kitty, am just as desperate as you," cried Edward —"I have lost all that interested me. I care now for nothing but deciding my fate, and setting myself down in the country a domestic young man at—"

"Twenty-two years of age," said Kate; "no, no, if yo love your cousin, marry her, she is rich and attached to you, believe; it is on all accounts a very desirable match, but do no hastily shut yourself out from every chance of more exalte happiness, in a fit of spleen, caused, as I suppose, by the col looks of a frowning beauty."

"Oh, no—no—indeed. it isn't that," said Edward, not little piqued at his sister's supposition, so injurious to h vanity: "my angel is kind beyond measure, volunteers

meeting, or even a visit to me here, but I have acted prudently and terminated the correspondence."

"For good and substantial reasons, no doubt," said Kate.

This was more than Edward could bear, and resolving upon making his sister a real confidant, he ran to his room, and returned almost breathless with the letter he had received from Miss Scrimshaw; the laughter excited by which, on the part of Miss Maxwell, was so loud, so long, and so very unusual, that it was unanimously resolved by the whist party, to call upon the laugher to account for her extraordinary mirth. Edward for a long time resisted, on the plea that a famale's letter, however odd and strange, ought under all circumstances, to be held sacred; until an absolution having been granted by Kitty herself, who declared her right of judging in such a case, and who was anxious that the true cause of her gayety should be fairly exhibited, the ever-memorable epistle was read by the young gentleman himself to the assembled whist players—among whom no one enjoyed it more than Moss, who chuckled to hear the triumphant fulfilment of all his prognostications as to the forlorn damsel of Drury-lane.

Neither Maxwell, nor Apperton, nor even the vicar of Fudley-cum-Pipes was backward in raillery, and poor Edward was forced to retire to rest under as heavy a fire of jokes and laughter as ever assailed an unfortunate Philander after a signal defeat.

One kind heart alone felt pain for him, and that was Kitty's; the conversation she had had with her brother was not so easily obliterated from her recollection; she saw by his manner that he was vexed and mortified, and that his vexation and mortification would speedily vent themselves in an avowal of his determination to marry his cousin, of whom his general opinion had been expressed so frequently, and in such unqualified language, as left no doubt of its sincerity. She hoped that this resolution would be re-considered, yet she saw fresh excitement to it in the ridicule heaped upon the frustration of his promised speculation, and sympathizing in a sentiment which now appeared to her to be common to them both, felt convinced that he would plunge into the marriage which his heart rejected, merely for the purpose of rescuing himself from the character of a foiled, rejected, disappointed lover.

With what justice Miss Katherine Maxwell drew her conclusions, time, and perhaps the next chapter, will show.

CHAPTER VI.

"There be three parts of business; the preparation; the debate o examination; and the perfection; whereof, if you look for despatch let the middle be the work of many, and the first and last the work o few."—LORD BACON.

"AND an excellent and wise resolution too," said Maxwell, entering the drawing-room, after a conversation with his son in the library, which had occupied the time from the breaking up of the breakfast-table until noon.

"I can guess what it is," exclaimed Katherine.

"So can I," cried Moss.

"Kate knows," said Edward, "and therefore I dare say Mousetrap is in the secret."

"We have laughed you into a marriage with the Jenny creature," said Godfrey.

"And extremely happy it makes me that you have," replied the surgeon. "We shall now have a double wedding."

"From which," said Moss, "you expect double diversion, I suppose, as sportsmen do from double-barrelled guns; but how's that to be managed?—Is Kittum's wedding to be put off?"

"If she will give us leave," said her father, "to postpone it for ten days or a fortnight."

"I'll answer for *her*," said Moss, "but I cannot answer for my brother, for he must be down at Fudley next week—it is visitation time, and the archdeacon, the bishop's eye, as I call him, comes there to poke about and see that the church steeples are all in order."

"But he can return to us," said Maxwell.

"But then," said Edward, "poor Katherine's happiness will be delayed nearly three weeks."

"Oh, pray don't mind *me*, Ned," said his sister. "If you who are my junior, can consent to wait so long, surely I can bear the postponement."

"I hate putting off marriages," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of snuff—"and Apperton is not here to consent."

"I should, under ordinary circumstances, decidedly object to delays in such matters," said Maxwell, "but on this speci

occasion I confess I think it would be both agreeable and desirable to conclude the two affairs simultaneously; it would look well, and I should feel settled and happy."

"And so should I, sir," said Edward, "settled for life."

"Yes, and another thing I can tell you," said Moss—"mark my words—if you stand shilly-shally with that Jenny cretur, your little whiffling friend, the monkey-faced major, will nick her up, as sure as my name's Moss."

"There, my dear Mousetrap," said Edward, "I flatter myself you are somewhat in error,—however, as I have said to my *father*, if the connexion is to be made it may as well be made at once. I am just in the humour to settle, and I should like, if possible, to make up a matrimonial rubber."

"There seems but one difficulty," said Kate, "and that arises thus—Edward has for the last year pointedly and sedulously avoided his cousin Jane, and has merely passed a formal week or two at Dullham-house in the course of a twelvemonth, and those by instalments of a day at a time; she I know has felt piqued, and indeed has frequently written to me, to express her apprehension that Ned didn't feel any great affection for her—now how the chilled embers of her attachment are to be fanned up into a flame strong enough to burn upon the altar of Hymen in fourteen days, 'from the date hereof,' I confess myself unable to exactly comprehend."

"Trash, about the altar of Hymen," said Moss, "who's Hymen? Jenny Epsworth will jump as high as a cretur with one leg shorter than another can, to get any body to marry her—and if—"

"My dear Mousetrap," interrupted Edward, "a joke's a joke, but both Jane's legs are precisely of the same length, and therefore don't calumniate her."

"But if they are not, I suppose your father there can put 'em to rights," said Moss; "I don't care about her legs, nor you either—"

"Come, come," said the elder Maxwell, "do not let us be too hard upon Edward—he knows that he obliges me when he consents to do that, which, in a worldly point of view, must be advantageous and agreeable to himself, and if Jane is not beautiful, we cannot help it; I have no doubt she is extremely good."

"And if not handsome," said Moss, "thinks herself so, which perhaps makes her good-natured."

"Still," said Kate, "I don't understand how this avowal and declaration, and acceptance, and arrangement, and all the

preliminaries, and all the ratifications can be managed in a *fort* night."

"I will write to her to-day," said Edward.

"What, and order a wife, as you would a coat?" said Moss.

"No, I will explain my feelings and views," said he "which I can do better in a letter than in an interview—then, if her reply is warm and encouraging, I will start, take advantage of the sunshine, soothe her, please her, win her, and bring her up to London, aunt and all."

"Depend upon it," said the elder Maxwell, "Edward knows the degree of influence he has over her, and so let him *manage* his matters in his own way. I confess the view he has at *length* taken of the case, is highly satisfactory to me, and *has* been brought about, as he says, by reflection."

"And the refusal of Patty Scrimshaw, of the Golden Cross, Charing-cross," said Moss; "psha—trash—bou—but never mind—here comes the old six-and-eightpenny stuff again—however, my poor brother may toddle off to Fudley, by to-night's mail, he'll not be wanted for three weeks at least—perhaps never—Eh, Kittums? there's no knowing what slips may happen between the cup and the lip."

"You make fewer than any man I ever met with, Moss," said the elder Maxwell.

"That's right, Mack," said Moss, "throw your wishy washy gin and water in my face—thank my stars I can get as much blue ruin as will satisfy me, for ten-pence a day, so you need not reproach me with the expense of my beverage."

"Well, Kitty, we have *your* consent then, at all events," said Edward, "to the postponement."

"Oh, yes," replied Kate, with a look which conveyed all her meaning to her brother, who knew precisely where her thoughts were, whenever the wedding-day was mentioned.

"I've a good mind to go down myself to Fudley with Jack," said Moss. "I'll take a box of segars with me—and he has got the Gentleman's Magazine, which I havn't read over above ten times, down at the vicarage, and there's the apothecary, and the attorney, very conversible creturs—a little fresh air will do me good, and so will the new-laid eggs, and the cream, and some of his old port; and then I shall be out of the way, and not spoil the billing and cooing. I'll be hanged but I'll go."

"You are not affronted, are you Moss?" said Maxwell.

"No, not I," replied Moss; "you are a well-meaning cretur; when I'm hit I can hit again, but I don't mind *you*, though you *do* grumble at my excess—if you kept a good stock of

randy and gin in your house, you wouldn't feel it so much. All the spirits you buy go to keep dead men's fingers and toes in, and such trash as that."

"I shall never forgive you, my dear Mousetrap," said Kate, "if you desert me."

"I'd rather die—and that's saying a great deal for a fellow so fond of living as I am," said Moss. "No—no—I'll be off to-night—I'll pack up a fortnight's stock of linen in a pocket handkerchief. I shan't want to change my coat, or the etcetera, so I can pop a razor in my waistcoat pocket, and borrow a *brush* at my brother's. I hate parade and preparation; there's nothing like compactness for comfort—no sooner said than done."

After which brief lecture upon the luxuries of life, Godfrey Moss removed himself for the purpose of communicating to the vicar the proposed postponement of the wedding, and his own proposition of accompanying him into Lincolnshire.

It was not until after a long conversation between the brother and sister, that Edward resolved to adhere to his determination with respect to Miss Epsworth; he had promised his father—his hopes had been blighted—and so he went over all the reasonings of the previous evening, and at length proceeded to write the avowal of his anxious desire to conclude that which had always been considered an engagement between them.

When Apperton returned from the city, it was held to be a matter of delicacy, and even difficulty, to announce to him the change which had been made in the arrangements for the nuptials; but the elder Maxwell undertook to negotiate the matter, and having, by a circuitous route, mentioned the subject of Edward's much wished-for marriage with his cousin, came at last to the point, and hoped that Apperton would not feel annoyed at their having altered and postponed the day without waiting to consult him, explaining, at the same time, the absolute necessity that existed for the presence of the reverend vicar of Fudley-cum-Pipes at his living in the intermediate time.

Kate entered the room during the discussion, and candid, or perhaps careless as she was upon the points of etiquette connected with the approaching ceremony, even *she* thought it necessary to put on an air of something like pique and dissatisfaction at the alteration.

"Then, when is it to be?" said Apperton.

"We now propose to-morrow three weeks," said Maxwell.

"Let me see—Tuesday—Thursday—Friday,—that will be the 14th," said Apperton.

"Exactly," said Maxwell.

"Twenty-two days," said Katherine, with a semi-sigh.

A pause ensued. The father and daughter were alarmed; they thought they had wounded the delicacy, and hurt the feelings of the ardent lover.

"The 14th?" repeated Apperton,—"couldn't we put it off till the 21st?—it would be more convenient to me, because of the 15th, you see, being the day for the account."

They were entirely relieved from all their embarrassments, and the 21st was fixed.

Kate looked at her future husband for above half a minute after he had begged for an "extension of time," as he would have called it, and thought of the being, of whom she might after the 21st never think without sinning.

The new arrangement was reported to the two travellers, who expressed great satisfaction that they might have four more days in the country; but Moss made no addition to his stock of drapery on that account: and at past ten o'clock that evening the brothers were seated, "*vis-à-vis*," in the Hull and Barton Royal Mail, at Ware, having there refreshed themselves with supper, and whence they departed with lighted cigars in their mouths, and as their calumniators say, a well-sized bottle of mahogany-coloured brandy and water in the coach pocket.

The evening in London was not passed in a manner half so lively or exhilarating;. Maxwell and Apperton talked in an under tone of securities and bonds, and a great fluctuation, and wonderful opportunity of purchasing shares in the Steam Hatching Poultry Company for almost nothing; to all of which the surgeon appeared most attentively listening, occasionally rising from his seat, and standing with his back to the fire-place, rattling all the silver in his breeches pocket whenever the great gains likely to accrue from the innumerable speculations of his enterprising son-in-law, were alluded to in the course of their interesting and exciting conversation.

Kate and her brother (whose spirits had met with a check, and whose views and feelings had taken a turn which led him to domesticate himself, and seek a sort of consolation in his sister's society,) remained in another sort of conversation at the other end of the room; and it must be admitted that a more dull or even uncomfortable evening has seldom been passed. Indeed latterly the liveliness formerly imparted to Maxwell's family circle, by the continued droppings in of stray friends had very much diminished since the

formal announcement of Katherine's approaching marriage; those considerate acquaintances thought the domestic circle ought not to be broken in upon, and that the young people would be much happier alone. To be sure the casual every-day associates of the surgeon and his children did not see so deeply into the arcana of the family circle as we do, nor know so well the real state of affairs in progress.

The absence of the two brothers Moss was a subject of regret, silent on the part of Kitty, and avowed on the part of her father; the little bustle about the brandy and water, the fidget, the snarl, the joke, the grumble even of the misanthrope, would have come as reliefs to the family party, all of whom felt the announcement of bed-time to be the most agreeable event of the evening.

But the change was transient, for when Kate again found herself alone, again pressed her pillow and yet slept not; when she again revolved in her mind the importance of the step she was about to take, the eternal link she was about to forge for herself; a link which, while it bound her to one whom, if she could not fail to esteem, it was clear to herself she could never ardently admire, ought at once and for ever to kill the hopes which, though dormant in the heart of her who loves in sorrow and in silence, never die; she sighed, and hid her burning face in her hands until a flood of tears relieved her.

Within an hour of the period at which she saw her lover receive the news of the delay of his happiness, not only with composure and apathy but with a declared wish of further postponement, she had seen in the newspaper the name, the dreaded name, which never passed her lips, and which acted upon her mind and feelings like the most potent spell of magic whenever she beheld it written. Edward had seen it too—it appeared under the head of India news and announced the arrival of the adored, lost individual from Calcutta at the Cape of Good Hope, for the benefit of his health.

He was ill—dying perhaps—far—far from his friends—from all that was dear to him. What then?—what interest had *she* in his welfare?—She had obeyed the dictates of reason and the commands of her father—she had discarded and rejected him—she had accepted another husband—and *that* husband would claim her, perhaps on the day—the very day—on which the only being she had ever loved was buried in a foreign grave, an alien from his home, an exile from his country. An honourable exile it is true; but the thought of his distress, his illness, his sorrow, and his probable death, harrowed up her

soul, and from the bottom of her heart did she repent, th what she now stigmatized as worldly motives had induc her, under any circumstances, to put the final fatal seal up his exclusion from her love for ever

It was vain to reason ; the very fact of his anticipated dea might have in some degree reconciled her to the step she h taken.

The report announced him "dangerously ill." He wa perhaps, already gone from this toilsome world, and Apperto would wed a widowed heart, wholly unconscious of the w that pained it. It is not till the moment comes when th struggle is to be made, that we know the importance of the sa crifice we are about to consummate. The phrensy of feelin to which Kate Maxwell had worked herself by the recollection c foregone days, self-reproach for her former compliance with th will of her father, and equal self-reproach for her more recent obe dience to him, was all new to her—her placid character, her con stitutional calmness and coolness, all the philosophy of reason and of a mind well regulated and highly principled, gave way t the agonizing remorse which overcame her ; yet, such is th strangeness of feelings so acted upon, that recapitulating t herself the merits and claims of Apperton upon her affection, she rejoiced to find that no comparison could be instituted be tween *him* and the loved being she had for ever lost—if there had been an approach to rivalry in person or manners, mind or accomplishments, she might have been considered fickle,—she might have been supposed by those who knew her secret to have desired to obliterate the recollection of her first love by some supposed superior attractions in another suitor. No one now could suspect her of such a desire in marrying Apperton, who was in every point as opposite to his predecessor in her heart, as light to darkness.

When morning arrived, Katherine's natural propriety and prudence overcame the tumult of her passions, and at break fast she appeared the same kind and affectionate daughter as ever ; devoted to the duties of her station, and resolved by the aid of that practical piety, which formed at once her consola tion and support, to fulfil all that she had proposed to herself t do, and on which she knew depended the happiness of he father, and the comfort of his declining years.

Edward had not slept much, for he had in some degree, b not quite so deeply, involved himself in an affair, which now th day had passed and night come, *he* almost began to repent of- indeed, it seemed, as if the whole family were to be ma wretched by matches of expediency ; save and except that E

ıad resigned his prior attachment (if attachment it could led) in disgust, while his sister's was not a voluntary onment of the fondest and earliest wish of her heart.
wever, Edward was young and volatile, and, moreover, a The effect of love upon men is so totally different from hich it has upon the softer, gentler, and kinder sex, ɔ parity of reasoning will hold upon the different cases nptoms. Edward "voted marrying Jane a bore, and oped she would refuse him," and so on; at all of which s and hopings his hearers laughed, and taxed him with ious mode of preparing for the worst, so as to give his and *amour-propre* as gentle a fall as possible; while ıat thoughtful and silent, with an aching heart, that, ac- g to the ways of the world and the usages of society, ıave burst and broken before she dared give utterance real sentiments.

difficult, and perhaps it would not be interesting, to de- accurately the feverish and uncomfortable state in which ' passed at Maxwell's. It seemed as if the last four-and- hours had brought Edward and his sister more inti- acquainted with each other than they ever had been be- ɜuch is the force of sympathy. Edward had shown her was perfectly aware of her hidden sentiments and affec- ınd in full possession of the secret which she thought nan being knew besides herself. She had, up to this acting upon the feeling universally given by seniority, ɜr trifling in youth, considered Edward merely as a boy little brother—and could scarcely believe her senses, he found him sympathizing with her, and entering cor- ıto all her views and propositions, upon what, notwith- g her subdued feelings, was in fact the important, vital f her life.

morning wasted away, and Edward felt the more wor- ım the consciousness that he could not hear from Miss ·th, nor ascertain the temper of her mind, until the next ɔr with all the activity of our post-office, and all the me- s exertions of its excellent and indefatigable secretary, ot yet been considered convenient (to say the least of ɔlige one with an answer to letters sent a hundred miles, ome six-and-thirty hours, so that the impatient suitor— can hardly call him—had nothing left for it but to read k away time with Katherine, who, now she had es- d a sort of confederacy with him, referred with melan- ɔleasure to the secret of her heart, in a manner which,

had it been spoken of a day or two before, she would *not have* believed herself capable of adopting even towards *him*.

It was nearly three o'clock, on this day of anxious watchfulness, when a letter was brought to Edward, the superscription of which was evidently in the handwriting of Major Overall. The moment he saw it, it struck him to refer to some connexion or engagement entered into between the Major and Miss Epsworth, for he had so high an opinion of Moss's almost intuitive perception of human character, that contrary even to his own judgment he believed he should find the Major eventually his rival. His surprise, however, may be better conceived than expressed, when he read the following :—

"—— Hotel,
"Tuesday, two o'clock.

"DEAR MAXWELL,

"If you will permit me still so to address you, for under all the circumstances and the correspondence which has taken place between you and Martha, there can be no doubt you are fully apprized by some means or other, of what has taken place. The surprise is great—wonderful, extraordinary to *me*, and more striking than it could have been even to you ; but I can hardly think you will consider my conduct as amounting to a breach of confidence or friendship.

"When Martha received your appeal at the inn at Charing-cross, it naturally overwhelmed her, for though her feelings are perhaps none of the finest, still her apprehension of consequences was terrible ! wonderful ! and knowing, the moment she saw your name, the circumstances of our friendship, she felt herself placed in a most awkward predicament, and, as she has since told me, thought it best to admit the whole of the facts at once ; indeed if you had not so naturally,—I will say,—cut short the correspondence, she would have told you herself the reason of her being in town, together with the arrangements made for the elopement and marriage.

"I assure you, I am half afraid to hold out the olive branch lest you should reject it. The temptation was too great, and I have fallen. I regret greatly, that we should thus have clashed ; but as I believe the young lady's affections were really and truly mine, that fact of itself will perhaps reconcile you to a loss, which after all you will not, I am sure, regret. My poor trembling bride dreads to meet you, or your father, or your sister, of whom she tells me she is even more afraid than of any other part of the family. Why she has formed this

opinion of Miss Kitty, I know not; however if you will accept the proffered hand, and meet *us* with your usual kindness and good nature, we shall be delighted to receive you, either to-day or to-morrow about four o'clock, here, when I will introduce you in form to Mrs. Overall.

"We shall remain but a very short time in England. Martha's mother, who came up with her daughter in the first instance had made every preparation for our reception, and we are surrounded with boxes and packages nearly chin high, but we shall be too happy to have a reconciliatory meeting as soon as possible and a declaration of peace, although I have most unexpectedly stepped between you and the happiness you proposed for yourself.

"Pray come to me, or, if not, write a line, and believe me—

"Yours most truly,

"H. Overall."

"What a curious coincidence this is!" said Edward. "Only think, Kitty, the protector and now husband of my unknown wonder, is neither more nor less than our volatile major—this is always the case, he bragged like a French count, and swore that he would marry nothing but a fortune, and now he has entangled himself for life with a poor girl, who, as she told me herself, has nothing upon earth she could call her own."

"Except her heart," said Kate—"and *that* she has given to that odious, conceited little creature, Overall."

"Martha Scrimshaw and Major Overall!" exclaimed Edward. "To think that the prodigiously refined major—the most delicate, the most particular, the literary, the classical, the all-accomplished traveller, who has 'seen the world,' should be really united to the authoress of the letter which I had the honour to read in full divan! However, I must admit that she *is* beautiful, and so I'll e'en go visit them—the removal from the Golden Cross, to their present aristocratic hotel is judicious—but how will she refer to the meeting in the Park, to the thief-taker, and all that? and why could he have left her alone so long, and when did he come up from the Epsworths? I shall have a million questions to ask, with a determination to make no allusions, no, not even to the letter itself."

"Go, Edward, go and see them," said Kate, "and pray beg the young lady to dismiss all her apprehensions about me. How she has imbibed her fears I cannot guess—the major must have described me to her as a vastly formidable person; but pray do you reassure her: if your father were at home we would of

course invite them here; for after the intimacy of the major in this house, there can be no difficulty in offering them the little civilities of hospitality, during what he says will be their short stay in town."

"Well, Kate," said Edward, "after this never disbelieve in Moss's curious coincidences. I shall have, however, one laugh at Mousetrap—he always said Overall would marry for money—there we have him; but I'll lose no time—I'll be off—of course I shall be back to dress for dinner. I shall go nowhere into society till I hear from Jane—I think I may now make a confidant of the major, for since he is *hors de combat*, I may trust him with less reserve than heretofore."

And accordingly Edward Maxwell bent his steps to the hotel which contained the major and the beautiful *incognita*. He considered on his way to their residence how he should behave; he anticipated feeling no small degree of awkwardness in beholding in the bride of his friend, the recent object of his romantic search and inquiry—still he resolved to be cool, and having rehearsed, as it were, some few common-place civilities, wherewith to open the campaign, he reached the door, entered it, and inquired for Major Overall's apartments. He was ushered up—announced—a suddden whisking of drapery, and an abrupt bang-to of an inner-door, proclaimed the rapid retreat of the timid lady.

"Ned, how are you?" said the major.

"As well as any man very much surprised can well be," said Edward.

"I thought you would be astonished," said the major; "however, depend upon it all's for the best—your discovery was very curious, astonishing, surprising. I should hardly have thought you would have remembered Martha's person after seeing her but once and for so short a time."

"Oh, I assure you, Overall," said Ned, "there are some people whose faces make a deeper impression in one interview than others are able to produce in years."

"And is Martha's one of those d'ye think?" said Overall, "for *my* part, I think her hideous, horrid, dreadful, abominable."

Edward was astonished at the major's *tirade* against his lady.

"I am afraid," continued Overall, "that a sly habit of taking what our friend Mousetrap calls the ginnums, has not a little contributed to destroy the personal appearance of the gentle Patty."

'd's amazement here became immeasurable.
ıst go, however, and find my better half," said Overall:
ı away the moment she heard you announced—for I do
ɔven now—and I say it that shouldn't—if you had been
ımonly attentive, her affections would never have wan-
-wait a moment. Oh, Ned, Ned," added the major,
s leaving the room, "you have been wicked, bad, in-
ıte—eh—and the result, more your fault than my

ɔ he repaired to his lady's chamber, leaving Maxwell
:h in doubt whether what he had seen and heard could
ɔr whether the major, like his bride, had not been in-
in a little of Mousetrap's "ginnums" before dinner.
ld that the girl was not handsome, when he himself
ı ready to marry her for her beauty alone—to be told
indulged in the use of strong liquors, and that if he,
only played his cards well, *he*, the major, never would
ıined her hand; all this so completely mystified him,
surprise and amazement were very little increased,
: door opened and exhibited Major Overall, leading in,
ide and partner for life, the *ci-devant* Miss Jenny Eps-
e intended wife of his thunder-stricken visiter.
!" exclaimed Edward.
dear cousin," cried the agitated Jenny, and before he
re of what she was meditating Edward felt himself
ound the neck and wetted with either tears or *Eau de*
but which, in the confusion of the moment, he was
ıble to ascertain.
t does all this mean?" said Edward, disengaging him-
the tender embrace of his faithless cousin, "did you
tter, and have you thus rapidly arrived to answer it in

etter, my dear cousin," said Jane, "my husband has
etter you wrote to Scrimshaw. I feel it all—but I
ɔu neglected me—I thought myself abandoned, dis-
or else, I—"
e, my dear Jane!" exclaimed the major, "you need
so many excuses—marrying *me* does not, according
ew of the case, require such great palliatives,—eh,
l, isn't it, Ned?"
ıll*y* am so overcome by amazement," said Edward,
m unable to collect myself sufficiently to decide what
conduct I ought, under the circumstances, to pursue
here to visit *you*, major, and your bride."

"And here she is, Ned," said the major, in the highest possible pitch of his voice, and with a corresponding attitude of exultation.

"Then where is Miss Scrimshaw?" inquired Edward.

"Scrimshaw, my dear Edward," said Miss Epsworth, "is *my* maid's mother, whom we sent on to town to wait for us to avert my aunt's suspicion, for she was so dreadfully averse from my marrying the major that—"

"Well, my dear girl," interrupted Overall, "there is no necessity, that I see, for dwelling upon an opposition which is so happily and fortunately overcome—it's absurd, ridic*ulous*, coarse, low, unpleasant."

"Scrimshaw your maid's mother?" said Edward; "what, at the Golden Cross, Charing-cross?"

"Exactly," said the major. "Jenny, as you must know, is timid, and never having been from under the shade of her aunt's wing, felt it would be more agreeable to her to have people about her whom she knew—so Scrimshaw was despatched to the Golden Cross, where you discovered her, and taxed her very naturally with a want of feeling towards *you*, and a disregard of your claim upon her young mistress."

"This," said Edward, "is confusion worse confounded—then you are not aware, Miss Epsworth, of a letter addressed to you by me yesterday?"

"Mrs. Overall, if you please, Ned," interrupted the major.

"Not I, Edward," said Jane: "what letter *do* you mean?"

"You had better return it unopened, Jane," said Edward, "and I think I had better retire from this most unexpected scene. I have been brought into contact unintentionally with a lady who has broken her faith, and a friend who has betrayed a confidence, and I—"

"But," said Jane, "you were aware of this before you came to us—you were aware that Scrimshaw was my maid's mother. You were aware of what was doing—"

"Not I, upon my honour," said Edward; "the whole thing has originated in a mistake."

"Mistake, Mr. Maxwell," said the heiress, bridling up; "then pray, sir, if you were *not* aware of all these circumstances, will you allow me to ask whom you imagined Miss Scrimshaw to have been; and to what claims, and what feelings, and what consideration, you refer in the letter which you addressed to her at the Golden Cross? Here it is, sir; and if you were ignorant of the business that brought that per-

son to town, what business was it that induced you to send such a letter, and receive an answer to it?"

Edward was, to use a nautical phrase, somewhat "taken aback," by this sudden squall.

"Come, come, Ned," said the major, "let's have no anger, you are caught in your own net. Jenny has regularly beat you—done—perfectly—thoroughly—completely—totally. Eh—who, as she says, 'did you think Miss Scrimshaw was'—eh bravo—bravo, Signora Jenina."

Edward began to think he was cutting rather a sorry figure before the enraged Jane and her exulting little major; but all his present feelings were trivial, nothing, compared with his anticipations of those to which he would be subjected, when his four-sider of devotion and adoration, despatched yesterday, came to Miss Overall's hands.

"I confess candidly," said he, "that I had *no* conception who Miss Scrimshaw was, when I addressed her; but I am perfectly confident that the circumstances, if explained, under which I wrote that letter, would completely exonerate me from the slightest impropriety."

"Very probable, Mr. Ned," said Mrs. Overall. "What does *this* passage in your letter mean, pray?—'That I have discovered you after all the precautions you have adopted, may prove to you at least that I am not to be baffled,'—pray, Ned, let me know, what does *that* mean?"

"Why, that means," said Edward, "that when I am resolved upon anything, I generally carry my point."

"What," continued Mrs. Overall, "do you mean by 'the attractions of beauty would have failed,' or what does the unreserved avowal of your name, residence, and circumstances mean?"

"Upon my life," said Edward, "I can stand no more cross-examination, and all I can beg you now to do, is to recollect that whatever turn affairs may take in consequence of your marriage with the major, my being here is not to be considered as a matter of inclination or choice, and that I protest against my visit being construed into either an acknowledgment of your claims on Miss Epsworth, or an admissionof *her* propriety or justice in attending to them. I leave you with no hostile feeling, but I must be understood merely to stand neuter, and that whatever civilities I may have proffered in my father's or my sister's name to the major and his lady, while ignorant of her character and condition, I must wait for a fur-

ther consultation with my friends before they can be c
under the circumstances as they actually exist."

Saying which, Edward proceeded to the door. The
rang the bell, held out his hand to Edward, which he coo
clined; and bowing ceremoniously to the bride, the
man quitted the apartment. Before he had quite clos
door, or rather before the major had closed it upon him
Overall leaped from her chair, and thrusting her head o
the passage, said:—

"And, Mr. Edward, when you call the great cou
your friends, have the goodness to lay a copy of your le
the supposed Miss Scrimshaw before them as the subj
their primary deliberation."

It would be quite impossible to describe the state o
Edward Maxwell's mind as he retraced his steps to his fa
house. The results of the deliberation in the "home d
ment," we shall probably discover in the course of the
chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

"Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once—"

SHAKSPEARE.

As I have just said, it would be very difficult, nay, pe
impossible, to describe Edward Maxwell's sensations wh
regained the street; he felt in the midst of a whirlpool o
tending passions and feelings; but amid all the mortific
jealousy, anger, disappointment, and vexation, surpris
most unbounded, and astonishment the most unqua
seemed to assail him most powerfully of all. His frien
insignificant, vapouring dandy, whom he had himself
down to the Epsworths to make a joke of, a butt of, a f
—that *he*, of all the people in the world, should have
seded and supplanted him in Jane's affections,—that *he*
have carried off the golden prize, was a blow which app
irrecoverable; for although she was an object of som
amounting almost to dislike, and certainly exceeding in
ence to him, while he had her at his beck, secure and s

the covert, ready, and only waiting his call to accompany him to the altar, now that he had lost her—just at the moment too in which he had resolved to take her,—now, he felt that he would rather have died than surrender her.

"If," thought he, "I had entirely discarded her—if I had married any one else, the case would have been different; but I had just determined to unite myself with her: and the worst part of the story is, that she herself must know that I had so determined; for the four sides crammed full of absurdities and protestations will reach her by to-morrow's post, and all my affectation of indifference will go for nothing;—but, above all, if she had *not* married anybody else, I should not have cared one farthing for her rejection of *me*." In short, he saw nothing, heard nothing, understood nothing, until he reached home, save and except that through the darkness and confusion of his mind, he caught one glimmering speck of light in the consciousness that the illiterate being whose letter he had received, was, after all, *not* the lovely creature for whom his heart was aching; and that to the trickery of Overall, and the fickleness of Jane, he was indebted for a discovery, upon which his future happiness or misery even yet so very much depended.

This, it must be admitted, was a redeeming consideration at the moment, and there was even yet another circumstance which afforded him, in a minor degree, a little additional satisfaction. Perhaps the reader will anticipate what I mean—the absence of Mr. Godfrey Moss, the arch-tormentor of all deluded youths; whose raillery upon the subject of Ned's defeat by the major would have been hardly bearable. But even with these palliatives the young gentleman, who had been taught to imagine that he had Miss Epsworth's affections entirely in his own possession, and thoroughly at his command, could hardly arrange his feelings so as to be ready, immediately on his return to his father's, to explain the *dénouement* of the affair to his family.

He arrived. They had actually sat down to dinner. Who were there?—His father, his sister, and Apperton.—Any one else?—Miss O'Connochie, and her brother; Mr. Salt, a merchant, and a Mr. Dabbs, a friend of Apperton's. What a very disagreeable circumstance: if he declined dining at home after his knock had been heard (for the surgeon dined in his front parlour, and the different knocks of the family on the house door were as familiar to the ears of the inmates as their faces were to their eyes), some inquiries would be made, and his absence would be attributed to rudeness, or perhaps ill-

ness; so resolving to seal up his thoughts and feelings hermetically for an hour or two, he entered the dinner-room, apologised for his lateness, ran up stairs for a few minutes to arrange his dress, and returned, making a profusion of excuses for his thoughtlessness, and asking permission of Miss O'Connochie and his sister to dine in boots.

There can hardly occur any thing much more unpleasant to a young man brim-full of a subject replete with interest and importance to himself, his heart and mind actually overflowing with discoveries and disappointments, than to find his lips luted by the presence of a party of strangers wholly and entirely unacquainted with the subject which occupies his thoughts; and who would be utterly indifferent to his agitation and excitement, even if they knew the cause. Every word they uttered appeared to be drawled out with peculiar slowness; they ate more leisurely than they ever did before; the servants were less active in removing dishes and changing plates. The minutes he fancied drawn out into quarters of hours; and as for enjoying the conversation which appeared to Edward so needlessly and disagreeably to prolong the sitting, he might as well, and as advantageously to himself, have sat by the side of a murmuring stream, or have listened to the howling of the wind down a chimney. It seemed to his aching ears like one monotonous chant, wholly unintelligible as to its matter, and rather unpleasant in its sound.

Apperton was playing *croupier*, and Edward sat next to him, but he was sufficiently well acquainted with his brother-in-law to know that, however otherwise qualified for business or general society, he had not the faculty of taking a hint with dexterity, or of comprehending, except by a full, fair, and complete disclosure of facts and circumstances, any thing a friend might wish to impart to him. To have mentioned Miss Epsworth's name, would have been to rouse the elder Maxwell's attention; he would have required an explanation, and have insisted upon being let into the subject of conversation. To have whispered to Apperton the great cause of his mortification, the marriage of his betrothed with the major, would have been to produce from him some exclamation of wonder and surprise, which would necessarily have excited universal observation, and perhaps compelled him to a full confession of his sad defeat before the assembled party; so poor Edward was forced to endure and suffer all the agonies of restrained grief and suppressed emotion, until a fitter season than the present should arrive for unburthening his teeming heart.

The ladies sat longer after dinner than ever they had in their lives before, and when Kitty had hemmed once or twice, and Miss O'Connochie had put herself into the first position for moving, he saw them both return themselves to their chairs, upon the soft and good-natured appeal of his father, who said, —"Don't leave us yet, ladies," in a voice of melody, as discordant to *his* ears as the turning of a brazen candlestick, or a dry wheel grating on the axle-tree, neither of which would have set his teeth on edge half so dreadfully as the sweet tone of solicitation adopted by his respectable parent to check the departure of his fair companions, and the dreadfully agreeable compliance with his wish, which both the damsels expressed visibly by smiles, audibly by words, and practically by reseating themselves at the table.

Mr. Salt and Mr. Dabbs, both strangers to Edward, now essayed (each in his peculiar way) to reward the ladies for their good nature, by relating certain stories concerning ghosts and spirits, all of which they had from undoubted authority; and even Apperton, who never much joined in general conversation, undertook to relate a "very curious thing," which he had heard from the clergyman of the parish where it occurred, in Somersetshire, of a murder having been discovered by the continued appearance of a vision in the shape of a young woman, who eventually led an old attorney to a blacksmith's door, close beside which the body belonging to the said spectre was found buried with the throat cut. Thence imperceptibly the conversation was diverted to hanging, and a catalogue of crimes and punishments was rehearsed, which Edward thought would have lasted until midnight—and it might have done so, had not one of those venerable, infirm personages who at that period slept during the night in upright boxes, and moved about occasionally in heavy great coats, armed with lanterns and sticks for the protection and convenience of themselves, just as a new subject was started, cried, in a sonorous voice, while passing the windows of the house, "Half past nine!"

Amazement seized upon all the party; all, excepting Edward, thought it impossible it could be so late: he was astonished that it was not very much later; but late or early, certain it is that no watchman ever more suddenly or successfully dispersed a respectable party than the veteran of Burlington Gardens. The bell was rung, the ladies were roused, the beaux were on their legs; and Edward was, "door in hand," in less than a minute after the hollow sound had burst upon their ears; Miss O'Connochie making what the players call an "effective exit,"

by entreating the gentlemen to show a reciprocal affection for the society of the ladies, by coming to them as *soon as* possible.

Miss O'Connochie was an Irish spinster, some five-and-thirty years of age, who, as it appeared by her conduct and conversation, would have had no objection to assume legally and properly the name of Dabbs or of Salt, or, indeed, the name of any other gentleman who might have been disposed to entitle her so to do.

At all events, Edward considered the main point carried. The men of the party were what is called, extremely *polite*, genteel men, and had, as they termed it, "a great admiration of the fair sex," and he therefore felt assured that they would not be long before they retired to the drawing-room. Maxwell, the elder, however, rang the bell for another bottle of wine, which was produced amid the cries of "No more"—"Oh dear, no more wine!"—"Oh, Mr. Maxwell, we have had quite wine enough!" and in spite of all these declarations, finished in about a quarter of an hour, when tea and coffee being announced, the party broke up.

Edward and his father remained in the parlour—he could no longer retain his information, nor restrain his desire to make a confidence. He stated to the old gentleman the occurrences of the day—the treachery of Overall—the marriage of Jane, as well as his own mistake with regard to the imaginary *Miss* Scrimshaw. Again the servant came to announce the tea and coffee—but the sire and the son were still deeply engaged in deliberation, for it seemed to Edward that the old gentleman considered the loss of Miss Epsworth's fortune much more seriously than he had expected. This delay brought to the council the kind-hearted Kate, who, constantly solicitous about her beloved parent, became alarmed, lest his absence from the drawing-room should be occasioned by illness.

The moment she was made acquainted with the history, she, who entered so warmly and feelingly into the interests and hopes of others, felt herself totally incapacitated from joining in the common-place conversation which was in progress upstairs, and the whole family, with the exception of Apperton, whom they expected every moment to arrive for the purpose of inquiring the cause of the general defection, were unanimously of opinion that nothing could be so dreadful as having to entertain their present visiters; Miss O'Connochie having before dinner announced that her pa and ma were dining somewhere

in the city, and would send the carriage to fetch her after they had returned home.

Common civility, however, decided the movements of the family, and they agreed in the absolute necessity of facing their friends, and endeavouring as much as possible to divert their attention from the more serious affairs of the family during the stay of their company; and accordingly they repaired *en masse* to the drawing-room, where they separated themselves among the groupe, and kept themselves purposely from any allusion or observation, each, however, while making the agreeable, *thinking* of no earthly subject but the one.

Maxwell, Dabbs, Salt, and Apperton made up a rubber, which promised to engage them for some time; Maxwell, being one of the old school, a sportsman who shot with a single barrelled gun, played billiards with the mace, and could not endure short whist.

Edward took a book into a corner of the back drawing-room, to affect to read; but he was very soon driven thence by the gentle and insinuating Miss Geraldine O'Connochie, who made herself particularly agreeable to him, by rallying him on being in love, and hoping his fair one was neither inconstant nor unkind.

Apperton interlarded his deals and tricks with a continued reference to Major Overall, whom he several times pronounced to be one of the cleverest little fellows he had ever met with, wondered where he was, and hoped he would be back in London before long.

Kate knew that nothing would so completely answer the double purpose of stopping Miss O'Connochie's comicality, and gratify her vanity, as asking her to sing, which she accordingly did, and was rewarded for her civility by immediate compliance on the part of Geraldine, and two family looks, one from her father, who detested music while he was playing cards, and the other from Edward, who, bored as he was by the conversation of the young lady, would rather have endured any thing than her execution (taken in a legal sense) of Moore's melodies, which, although herself Irish, and professing to have heard the author himself perform them, she murdered with malice prepense and aforethought, in the most hardened and unfeeling manner.

"*Il n'est si grand jour qui ne vienne à vêpre*," says the old French proverb, and with it, Edward endeavoured to console himself, reflecting like the Italian turnspit (the Italian turnspits, Major Overall would swear were coherent animals), that hard and

uninteresting as his labour might be, the gigot would be roasted at last; and, distracted as Edward was, the reader must imagine, *for* I cannot attempt to describe the effects upon his patience *and* the equanimity he either possessed or affected to possess, when, after the last lingering guest but one had actually departed, (which departure, however, did not occur till past midnight,) Doctor and Mrs. O'Connochie were announced, and ushered into the drawing-room. They could not think of losing the opportunity of coming up to see dear Mr. Maxwell when they called for their daughter, and who, now that they had dropped in just as the reduced party were enjoying that social and sociable repast, which, however basely and injudiciously decried in many families, was, as I have already said, observed and maintained with all its rights, privileges, and immunities at the surgeon's, they could not resist partaking of it.

Mrs. O'Connochie was prevailed upon to take a glass of warm red wine and water, with a bit of sugar in it, and the worthy doctor induced to take the thinnest possible slice of ham, just to "relish" one tumbler of gin punch which he had so frequently admired, whenever Godfrey Moss happened to be in town, and which the fair Katherine could not refuse to make after the so much approved fashion;—never, in short, were people so chatty, so conversible, and so pleasant, as upon the very night when their presence was purgatory to the whole family, whom they thought they were pleasing and delighting by their stay; and above all of the agreeable people was Mr. Dabbs, who had exhibited some amatory prepossession in favour of Miss Geraldine O'Connochie, and who was more facetious than he had ever been before in his life, especially on the subject of love and fidelity, the constancy of woman, and the deplorable state of the poor unfortunate devils who were sometimes jilted, a misfortune which never could be qualified in his mind, if it was not made clear to him that the discarded lover had made his advances with interested views, and attacked the lady for her fortune's sake, and then, he was pleased to add, he thought it served the money-hunter right.

But Mr. Dabbs was kinder than could possibly be expected: he was so very good-natured as to stay even after the O'Connochies were gone, on purpose to praise the gentle Geraldine, and perhaps ascertain the amount of her fortune; for which purpose, and because he thought it civil to wait for, and walk citywards with his friend and introducer, Apperton, he whiled away the time by making himself a second glass of hot brandy and water.

As this disposition to wait for Apperton was becoming more and more evident, and as it was thought right and proper by the Maxwells, if not absolutely necessary, under the circumstances, to call the said Apperton, being the son-in-law elect, into their cabinet council, for the purpose of determining forthwith what course was to be pursued with respect to the major and his bride, Edward contrived to give him a hint that they wished to speak to him before he went off, and that he had better convey another hint of a similar nature to his very attentive friend, Mr. Dabbs. This he did with the greatest *clumsiness* imaginable, by telling him *totidem verbis* that he had better go, that it was getting very late, and that he need not wait for *him*, because he was wanted to discuss some family matters of great importance, which they could not talk over while *he* stayed.

This pure, generous, and unsophisticated avowal of the fact, reduced Mr. Dabbs to the necessity of swallowing the boiling potion he had recently made; his performance of which feat, since it was long before the exhibition of Monsieur Chabert at the Argyle Rooms, filled the surrounding spectators with wonder, and produced a sort of professional joke from Apperton, upon the rate of insurance taken for throats: it moreover filled the eyes of Mr. Dabbs with involuntary tears, wiping which, and smarting under the scalding inflicted upon him by his extraordinary civility, he took his leave, apologizing for what he had been so candidly made to feel was the peculiarly tiresome length of his visit, at the same time gently reproaching his friend, for not having earlier in the evening told him that he was not going to accompany him in his walk homeward.

At length, however, the house was cleared, the servants ordered to bed, and the highly excited conclave assembled for the important discussion. The facts of the case were clearly and distinctly stated by Edward, and the question which immediately presented itself for debate was, whether under the circumstances Kate should visit the newly married lady on the following day, as the major had expressed a hope she would, or whether Jane's conduct had really been such as to justify a total separation from her and her husband, and an entire "cut," for ever after.

"The loss of the fortune," said Apperton, "is, you see, already definitively decided: not one per cent. of that, will be recovered by the quarrel; and therefore, if Miss Epsworth has voluntarily married the major, I see no reason why enemies

should be made, or dissensions created among relations and connexions, by refusing to receive or visit them."

"Much," said Edward, "depends, as far as I am concerned, upon the line of conduct Overall himself has observed in the progress of the affair—if Jane, as it seems from what I saw and heard to-day to be extremely probable, has thrown herself into the arms of this man, even though he is my friend, I ought rather to rejoice than lament—but if—"

"Much of this, Ned," said Maxwell, "I am sure, and quite sure, too, that you will admit it, has arisen from your own conduct towards your cousin. You have not evinced any affectionate disposition towards her. Month after month, week after week, you have received invitations to the house—you have seldom or ever gone, unless it was in the way to some other and more agreeable engagement, and when you have paid your visits, they have been short and hurried. She must doubtlessly have felt this neglect, and it seems to me has acted upon the impulse of feelings, perhaps the strongest by which women are actuated."

"Well, my dear father," said Kate, "but surely Edward is not to be blamed for this show of indifference if he felt it—the hypocritical assumption of regard and esteem, without possessing them, is much more dishonourable than the candid, honest course he has pursued."

"Judging by that rule," said the elder Maxwell, "nothing then has occurred in the present marriage which ought to excite either disappointment or anger in any part of our family."

"No," said Edward, "nothing—only let it be recollected that before breakfast to-morrow Mrs. Overall will have the power and the pleasure of exhibiting to her husband four sides of my letter entirely filled with prospects of future happiness, founded on the very esteem and regard, which now it seems I was extremely right, and very honourable never to affect."

"Esteem and regard alone," said Maxwell, "are surely not the feelings upon which to marry."

Katherine's cheeks glowed crimson—she looked towards her father, who affecting not to have encountered her transient glance, continued, "For a young man of your character and disposition, something more than such rational views are necessary to enchain and hold you—and lamenting as I do, the loss of a connexion which, in all other points, was very desirable I must say, that if she felt herself neglected, and if in consequence her affections leaned another way, I do not regret her avowal and decision in favour of the object of those affections

for recollect what a struggle she would have made, if in compliance with the predestined arrangements of our families, she had given her hand to you while her heart was another's."

This second exhibition of mental blindness to the parallel case actually in progress in his own family, and under his own eyes, had nearly thrown Kate off her guard; but such is human nature, and such its infirmities, that Maxwell, man of the world as he was, quick and penetrating as were his intellect and his judgment, was positively unconscious that he was arguing with all his power and ability against the very course he had himself pursued with respect to his much-loved daughter, now actually sitting before him.

"The question must be decided to-night," said Edward, "for I believe they quit London for the continent to-morrow or the next day."

"I wonder who the major has letters of credit on," said Apperton; "do you happen to know who their bankers are?"

"Not I," said Edward, who could neither help smiling, nor looking at his sister.

"But, pray," said the elder Maxwell, "has her aunt been reconciled to the marriage?"

"Quite the contrary," said Edward; "the *young* folk seem quite in suspense as to the line the old gentlewoman will take —but of course we shall hear from Dullham in the morning. I know that her aunt was so decidedly favourable to the completion of our engagement, that no power or persuasion would have induced her to consent to a deviation from it—hence the necessity for an elopement; for even though she should have changed her opinion with circumstances, it was quite out of the question, after all her declarations, that she should admit it."

"Yes: and I," said Kate, "have reason to know, that the old lady's warm and candid expressions of delight at the prospect of your marrying Jane, were among the horrors that kept you so much away from them."

"Well," said Maxwell, "my opinion is, that we had better wait for the arrival of the post to-morrow—let us see the view which the old lady takes of her niece's conduct, and how she explains her own share of the business, and the origin and course of the affair altogether; it will then be time enough for us to decide upon the line we shall adopt towards her. I quite agree with Apperton, that continued animosities in families are dreadful; we are none of us perfect, and if our own relations and connexions will not make allowances for the infirmities of human nature, the indiscretions of youth, or the ill regulation

of passion and feeling, who can we expect to view our errors with leniency?"

"Ditto, sir, ditto," said Apperton. "The bargain is struck, the interests of the firm are consolidated, and I really think, that it will be to the advantage, and for the respectability of all parties, to give them credit in our accounts."

"Well, then; we delay our final decision till the morrow," said the elder Maxwell, "so get you to bed, Kate—you must not keep yourself awake, because you are disappointed of a companion in matrimony. If we had known all this, we need not have delayed your—"

"My dear father," said Kate,—"good-night,—Apperton, you will be here at breakfast—only think what an escape Edward has had, in the absence of poor dear Mr. Moss—how he would have triumphed in the fulfilment of his prophecy about the major and Jane Epsworth."

"I assure you," said Edward, "his being away has not been one of the least qualifications of my distress upon the occasion, for by the time he comes back to open his batteries upon me, I shall have grown casehardened and callous."

When Kate, having taken leave of the party, had retired, Edward, who felt that there was yet something on his part to do, and who doubted, whether instead of receiving the major amicably (supposing the decision to take that turn), he ought not under the circumstances to call him to account for conduct which at present remained unexplained, and by which he had supplanted him in the affections of a young lady to whom he was actually engaged, and to whom it might naturally have been supposed he was devotedly attached; was about to open his heart upon his honourable scruples to his father and future brother-in-law; but considering the relationship in which both those gentlemen stood to him, the affectionate kindness of the one, and very little experience in affairs of honour in the other, he resolved to conceal his feelings upon the point that night, and as early as might be, on the following morning take the opinion of a friend, who, during a life of active military service abroad, and of constant association with the best circles at home, had established and maintained a high and unsullied character for decision and courage, tempered by sound discretion, and regulated by an intimate acquaintance with the usages of society—to him, unbiassed, and unprejudiced, as of course he was, Edward resolved to submit the circumstances of the case, satisfied that whatever the result might be, his honour would be safe in the hands of his friend, and that he should

reater comfort and satisfaction recur in aftertimes to an his conduct in which had been conformable to the sug- is of one so competent to advise and direct.

erton's feelings were all engaged and interested in the loss of property, which was the natural consequence of infidelity and Major Overall's marriage; and even ell himself seemed, from the very first, more affected by articular point of the business than any other. It was it, now that the thing was settled, that he was anxious for ific conclusion to the affair, and for what is called "mak- best of it," strengthening himself in that view by sundry bial axioms of his son-in-law, to the effect that, "what e cannot be undone;" so that when the family of the ells retired to their rooms to rest, I can confidently say e current of their thoughts set towards the pacific.

reakfast they again assembled, little the better for their ent the night before. New interest, and a new turn to however, were given by the arrival of the expected let- n Dullham, in which the old lady expressed her grief and at the event, consoling herself with the reflection that is now aware of the safety of her poor niece, blaming a precipitancy so totally unexpected by her relations, claring her determination never again to see her, or par- er conduct, unless the Maxwells generously set the le. She said that she of course possessed the feelings to her nearest living relation; but she also felt it her the memory of her late brother, and to the character elings of his surviving connexions, to express and con- he manifestation of her entire disapprobation of a step, ivance in or an approbation of which on her part, she have considered most dishonourable and improper. The contained a lengthened, and evidently sincere vindica- herself from any participation in Jane's misconduct, and nt expression of her entire ignorance and want of sus- of the meditated elopement. She was aware that haw, the mother of Jane's maid, had left the neighbour- nd once was surprised by finding her niece apparently ed in that person's journey to London; but knowing had always been a favourite dependent of hers, she saw particularly to excite her attention, little thinking that hful envoy was in the pay of the major, and sent forward are accommodations, and make purchases, for her dear lady and her volatile little husband.

rimshaw!" exclaimed the elder Maxwell, when he heard

the last paragraph of the old lady's letter read; "why, Ne you seem to have been doubly unfortunate—was not Scrim shaw herself the beautiful creature whom you followed an hunted, after having saved her life in Long-Acre?"

"That was *my* error," said Edward; "in pursuing the beauty, I hit upon the soubrette—by some pantomimic trick my lovely *incognita* contrived, as it now appears, to escape me and having been thrown upon a wrong scent—"

"—You shot at a pigeon and killed a crow," said Apperto "and *I* think, Master Edward, if you had never seen that bea tiful creature, as you fancy her, the chances are that Jane wou not now be Mrs. Overall."

"Oh, never mind thinking of what is past," said Kate anxious to soothe and conciliate; "it is quite clear, as far a Mrs. Epsworth is concerned, that she is no party to the run away marriage, therefore she stands clearly exonerated. Sh says she knows their place of residence, but that she has n written to her niece, although she has forwarded a letter, s thinks from Edward, to the hotel where they are,—this perfect candour; and above all, she makes our reconciliati to the bride and bridegroom a condition of *her* forgivene Now the question is, can we under such circumstances wit hold our pardon, seeing that it involves the separation of tv such near and dear relations."

"As for me," said Edward, "I am prepared to do any thin that is fair and just towards Jane, upon the conviction, which have no hesitation in avowing, that whatever other consider tion might have weighed with our families, my heart never w much concerned in the matter; but there is something due think, to my personal character in the affair, and I cannot co sent, at the outset of my life, tamely to submit to the exhibit of a friend in the character of a rival, without at least obta ing an explanation of the circumstances under which I ha been supplanted."

"My dear Edward,"—said Maxwell.

What more he would have said, it is not possible for me record, seeing that the arrival of a servant, armed with a la packet, stopped the current of the old gentleman's speech came from Major and Mrs. Overall—and was directed to M Maxwell. The unexpected arrival of this flag of truce pended not only hostilities, but debate.

Katherine broke open the packet—it contained a letter dressed to herself, and a somewhat larger one directed to brother. She handed it to Edward, who, with a tremb

and, rapidly tore asunder the envelope. It contained his own last letter to Jane, and the following lines from the young lady herself.

"DEAR EDWARD,

"Enclosed is the letter to which you alluded when you visited us at our hotel yesterday. The character in which it is possible you may have addressed it to me, is one from which I ought not now to receive any communication; besides, it is directed to Miss Epsworth, and that *not being my name*, I do not feel justified in opening what was meant for *another person*. I have written at length to your sister; she will, I dare say, show you the letter, as I have desired her to do so; when she has, you will perhaps judge more leniently of *my* conduct than you are yet prepared to do, and at all events more favourably of the conduct of others who are dear to her who most sincerely subscribes herself,

"Your faithful friend,
"And affectionate cousin,
"JANE OVERALL."

"A perfect angel!" exclaimed Edward, "I never thought she could be half so amiable. Here is my letter unseen, unopened, unlaughed at: one thing is certain, she could not have acted in this manner without, at least, the assent of her husband."

"I must say, as far as it yet appears," said the elder Maxwell, "the girl has behaved most honourably."

"But she cannot give back any of her money," said Apperton.

"And therefore," said Kate, "it is useless our talking about it. Here is her letter."

Kate read as follows:—

"MY DEAR KATHERINE,

"I am not certain whether under the very peculiar circumstances in which I have placed myself, and the very decided step I have taken, I should have had courage to address one, who with the affection which I know she entertains for her brother, might possibly, nay, must feel herself wounded and offended by me. But his accidental visit—as it turned out to be—to *me* in the character of his friend's bride, and the receipt of the letter which I have herewith returned him, compel me to avail myself of the only opportunity I may have

of palliating what I am conscious must be annoying
tressing ; and justifying as much as possible, conduc
at first sight may not only involve me in a charge of
and fickleness, but implicate another in a still mor
charge of deceit and treachery to a friend.

" As disguise or concealment must be now una
shall merely throw myself upon your candour and im
to recall the conduct of your brother towards me du
last year or two ; and I do this not for the purpose of
ing his taste, or of reproaching him for his neg
merely to bring to your recollection the fact, that ha
considered in *my* family, and in yours, as his affiance
has, during a period of two years, passed altogeth
days at Dullham, and those at different and divided t
generally on his way to other places and other enga
Whenever he has been here, his manner, although
civil and good-natured, never exhibited any of th
which would be the natural result of a warm and aff
feeling ; and I might almost go to the length of sayi
out reflecting harshly upon any of his venial foibles, t
than once I have perceived myself to be rather an
his amusement than of his regard.

" It may be that the very security he felt of posse
—in short, of commanding me—might have induced
ference which, if I never complained of it, I sincere
you I have severely felt ; but which most certain
never have been spoken of by me, except in vindica
partiality which I have no shame now in admittin
present husband. His conduct to me has ever be
and affectionate. I am not to be told, Katherine, t
deficient in some of those attractions which distingu
other young women, but it may serve as some excus
conduct to say, that Edward's obvious conviction of
riority, was a death blow to my happiness and cor
because it conveyed to my mind the knowledge of
imperfections, but because it convinced me how low
his esteem, and how much more our marriage wou
part be a matter of duty than of inclination.

" People who have visited us, and Edward, ever
himself, have formed a wrong estimate of my judg
perception ; they have thought that when they wer
the most fulsome flattery into my ears, they could
eyes, and that the evidence of my looking-glass, was
tirely overthrown by their eloquent eulogiums upon

sonal charms. They and he were very much mistaken: and my fate may serve as a warning to those witlings who pique themselves upon making what they call a 'butt' of any unfortunate young woman, who, too proud to acknowledge the pangs she feels, and too well-bred to be angry, submits to the raillery she cannot fail to understand, with a smiling countenance and an aching heart.

"Edward is to see this letter—he must see this passage—it is better he should, for though I place him high above those who ordinarily practise the art of 'irony,' in the way I describe, I have received even from his lips, and the supercilious smile which curled them, torture which I have struggled with greater torture to conceal.

"These convictions then, sufficed to assure me, as I have just said, that if Edward eventually fulfilled the intentions of our families, it would be either as a compulsory measure, or a cold compliance with the inclinations of others; and I confess I so plainly felt that he had himself so much loosened the chain by which I was bound to him, that I doubted whether its total abandonment would not rid him of a disagreeable responsibility. That I was not very wrong, the circumstance which induced him to address old Mrs. Scrimshaw in a tone of adoration, which she, poor matter-of-fact body, did not comprehend, and throw himself at her feet *by mistake*, is a somewhat satisfactory proof. It is true, this affair was not known to me until after I had decided on my plans, but it is to me something very like a corroboration of all my feelings and expectations on the subject.

"I have little left to add, but that little is of great importance, since between man and man such matters should be always clearly explained,—I mean the part which Major Overall has taken in the business. Throughout the whole of my acquaintance with him, the theme of his praise, and the object of his admiration has been Edward. It was I myself who, with great difficulty, induced him to believe in his indifference for me: he referred constantly to our engagement, and never breathed a thought which could tend to weaken its importance and validity. In whatever has happened, I alone am to blame; for even with all his devoted affection for me, he never ventured to disclose his real views and object, until I had voluntarily and explicitly declared not only my conviction that I was disagreeable to your brother, but my firm determination never to ally myself by marriage to your family, on the terms upon which Edward alone seemed inclined to receive me.

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All that I beg on this point is, that you will clearly *and distinctly* understand that Major Overall's conduct throughout has been as equally regulated by a jealous sense of honour towards Edward, as by an affectionate regard and esteem for me.

"I have only to say that if we are to meet again before our departure for the continent, I shall most happily and gladly hail our reunion. Upon your decision, I am given to understand by an emissary from Dullham, depends the forgiveness of my dear aunt. I will not so far impose upon your kindness as to make that a plea in my favour with you and your family, but a reconciliation with all of you, and above all with her, are the only things now wanting to complete my happiness and comfort. Her blessing and your smiles will be invaluable to me —they depend on each other; and if I can restore my husband to Edward's friendship, keeping too a share of it for myself, a heavy weight will be removed from my heart, and I shall truly and sincerely subscribe myself,

"Your happy and affectionate friend,

"JANE OVERALL."

"The thing is settled," said old Maxwell; "the girl is a girl of sense, she has shown herself not the silly, demented creature that Mousetrap set her down for; she has exhibited intellect and spirit, good sense and good feeling; and all I can say is, I hope, Mr. Ned, you'll make as good a match somewhere else."

"I think there will be no fight after this," said Edward.

"Fight!" cried Katherine, to whom this was exhibiting a new view of the subject; "Heaven forbid!"

"I think the thing is uncommon handsome, altogether," said Apperton.

"I am afraid I have been blinded by prejudice," said Edward, "and talked out my right feelings; however, that's past: and as far as I am concerned, I am ready this moment to accompany Kitty to call on them, or to be the bearer of an invitation here."

"Then take the carriage this moment," said Maxwell, "it is at the door, go—meet the reconciliation half-way—and that will be doing it well—bring them here, and let us have a happy meeting—I hate bearing malice."

"I never saw less disposition to maliciousness, in my life," said Kate. "Well, Edward, will you accept the mission?"

"With all my heart," said Edward; "only I trust I shall escape much questioning about Miss Scrimshaw's letter; I de-

clare if Moss were in town, I would abscond at once,—*there* I must say my fair friend hits me hard."

"And yet only sufficiently to show her power," said Kate: "She does not dwell upon disagreeables: so now hurry away with you, and we will arrange our scattered spirits."

"It will be an odd sensation, too," said Edward, "to—"

"Hang sensations," said his father; "be assured you are doing what is right, and put all the awkwardness out of the question; so away with you."

"And Ned," said Apperton, "if you should happen to hear that the major wants any thing in my way, just speak a good word for your brother-in-law."

"Oh! depend upon me," said Edward, who in a few minutes drove off in the carriage, for the hotel of his honourable, happy rival.

"His brother-in-law!" the words grated upon the ears of Kitty most discordantly; the dissolution of Edward's engagement with Jane, would, three days before, have appeared to her a thing infinitely more improbable than the breaking off of hers with Apperton. It is sad to say, that these thoughts were not unaccompanied by a wish—but why betray the secrets of my heroine?—if heroine a reasonable, well-bred, amiable, quiet young lady, in Burlington Gardens, may be called.

Edward drove to the hotel, found the happy couple engaged in all the intricacies of patterns, which manufacturers and milliners were displaying to their eager eyes. His appearance of course proclaimed the result of the family council. Jane ran towards him, when he entered the apartment, and a kiss on her cheek and a shake of her husband's hand, ratified the treaty of peace, of which the preliminaries had been signed half-an-hour before. There was no delay in her acceptance of a seat in the carriage, and while she was preparing for the excursion, the rivals entered into a familiar conversation, not without allusions to the great event; even jokes displayed themselves in the dialogue, which proved that all animosity was gone, and friendship was again happily restored.

Jane speedily reappeared, loking, as Edward thought, better than she ever had looked before, and almost pretty; but fearful least he should incur the imputation of "heart-breaking raillery," he held his tongue, and handed her silently into the carriage; the major followed, and just as Edward had set his foot upon the lower step, his eye was suddenly attracted by a passing female in deep mourning.

It was his mysterious beauty—he could not recede—he

could not stop—he entered the carriage—the steps were clapped up, and the door banged too by the footman, and the horses were off in an instant. The mysterious beauty had vanished.

CHAPTER VIII.

"We have a trifling foolish banquet towards."
SHAKSPEARE.

LET the reader, if he have one spark of sympathy for Edward Maxwell, just think of his feelings at this moment; wedged into a carriage with a successful rival and a jilting mistress, and beholding again, and perhaps for the last time, the being about whom, in all the world, he was the most interested, and who had (unconsciously to be sure,) in the first instance, put the final seal to his determination not to fulfil his engagements with his betrothed, and whose supposed ignorance and vulgarity, in the second place, had driven him to renew his suit, just at the very moment when the young lady had taken *the* most serious and effectual method of preventing its favourable issue.

Both the bride and bridegroom saw his confusion.

"A beautiful girl, by Jove," said the major. "Exquisite—Italian eyes—Grecian nose—eh—sublime—Jove—fine—delicious."

"So Edward seems to think," said Jane; "this is not your Miss Scrimshaw, is it?"

Never came a more mortal shot from deadly weapon, than this too admirable guess.

"No," stammered Edward, "no, not exactly."

"Oh, I dare say, *she* is something superlative," said Jane.

"Come, Jane, come," said her husband, with a look, the like of which she had never seen while he was her lover, "peace is declared—let's have no skirmishing."

This little dialogue might have been carried on in Hebrew or Sanscrit, instead of English, as far as poor Edward Maxwell was concerned. He had seen her; she was gone; she yet dwelt upon his sight, and on his mind's eye was indelibly *engraven*. An attempt to break into a conversation was

useless; the very effort, mingled with the consciousness that it *was* an effort, defeated itself, and he gave it up; he found he could not rally; so pending this awful silence, the major and his lady exchanged the most affectionate glances, and the major laid his hand upon hers and patted it kindly and encouragingly, and then she withdrew it frowning and coquettishly, and looked at Edward, as if to warn her over gallant husband of the indecorum of his undisguised attentions to a wife, and the danger of her cousin's satirical remarks hereafter. Edward, however, *still* remained buried in thought, and sick at heart, that he should again have lost the opportunity, perhaps the last he ever might have, of enforcing his suit with the lovely "vision."

The first event which aroused him from the revery into which he had fallen, and which it is but fair to imagine (even if I did not know the fact) Jane flattered herself was entirely occasioned by the sight of her happiness and that of the Major, was their arrival at Maxwell's door. The sound of the knocker flurried the bride, who had always felt an inferiority in the presence of Katherine, not only on account of her character and accomplishments, but on the score of age (for the start of three or four years in early life is never quite made up in after times), and she accordingly breathed quicker, and looked at her spouse, and then at Edward, who, in handing her from the carriage, felt not only the friendly pressure of the hand he once expected to make his own, but an actual trembling, which announced that real timidity and apprehension of the approaching interview with his sister, had some share in the tumult so visible in his cousin's manner and appearance; a fact for which, in the present temper of his mind, Edward could not, without this practical evidence, have given Mrs. Overall credit.

The scene when she met Katherine in the drawing-room, is beyond my power of description; she shed floods of tears, hid her face in her fair friend's bosom, clung round her, and performed a certain number of hysterical evolutions; while Edward walked to the window, totally engrossed with the thoughts of his dulcinea; old Maxwell held Jane's hand, and patted the palm of it, and the Major murmured, *sotto voce*, "Sensible—delicate—amiable—charming—affectionate—kind—good," and other words of similar import, always beginning his eulogies at the superlative point and dropping, as if from the exhaustion of his eloquence, into the very bathos of commonplace commendation.

Time, and a tumbler of cold water, brought the tender

creature round; but she was not yet sufficiently recovered to bear a general conversation, and accordingly she and Katherine retired to the boudoir of the latter, where she detailed all the circumstances by which she had been induced to take so decisive a step; and argued the matter in the spirit of her conciliatory letter so effectually, that Kate, who was, in fact, the most strongly prejudiced of all the family against her, became a convert; while the major, in his very candid explanations to the two Maxwells, succeeded equally well in clearing himself from any imputation of treachery or deceit, and before three o'clock the whole party were as perfectly reconciled to circumstances and to each other, as the most sanguine peace-maker in Christendom could have hoped to see them. Letters were despatched to old Mrs. Epsworth, begging her to transport herself forthwith to town, to join the happy group; and if she did not feel inclined to accompany the new married people to the continent (which Overall was perfectly resolved she should *not*), at least sanction by her presence in the metropolis, the approaching nuptials of Apperton and Kate.

In the midst of this general consolidation of interests, as Apperton called it, there were two hearts that gladdened not —neither Edward nor Kate could command their spirits; no, not even their countenances, so as to fashion them into mirth. Edward's ardent and romantic devotion to the *ignis fatuus* which haunted him, wholly unfitted him for any ordinary enjoyments, or an association with those who pronounced themselves (as all newly-married people do) the happiest creatures upon the face of the earth; and as for Kate, holding, as she did, Major Overall in something very like contempt, despising his vanity, and laughing heartily at his affectation, *she* could not see the entire and complete satisfaction which he and his bride exhibited, and the enthusiastic manner in which the one spoke of what they *would* do in Italy, and the other talked of what she should see, and how they should live, without casting a look at the cool, collected, red and white countenance of her future husband; the phlegmatic contempt which characterized it, while he heard the major scream his admiration of the bright skies of Italia, and the classical recollections of the eternal city; and anticipating, in her mind, the years of commonplace which she had doomed herself to pass, in the society of an individual for whom, whatever her esteem might be, she never *could* feel that enthusiasm which she once imagined the indispensable ingredient of happiness in married life.

Edward certainly had the better bargain of the two; for, in the first place, he was uncertain only as to what he might gain; in the second place, his loss was decided and ascertained: and now that he had again seen his adored, and seen her under the conviction that she was neither Miss Scrimshaw nor the illiterate authoress of the letter he had received, he had nothing to do but to hope and look forward. Kate had only to look backward and dread; however, the choice had been her own, she had played her own game, and the die was cast.

The elder Maxwell, after a certain time had been expended in conversation, thought, since the young couple did not blink the gaze of their friends in the morning, that perhaps, when it was later and darker, they might be disposed to partake of the family dinner. This, however, was impossible, for the major had promised to dine with his man of business, Mr. Palmer; and Mrs. Palmer, who was a very kind, good sort of creature, had suggested that the bride should not be left alone; that they would make her as comfortable as if she was at home; and knowing all the history of the case, she could feel no difficulty in going there, and so on; and therefore, it had been settled that the happy couple should take their food at half-past five o'clock, at Mr. P.'s, his residence being located in Hunter-street, Brunswick square; a part of our island which is bounded on the north by Barnet, on the south by Holborn, on the west by Burton-crescent, and on the east by Gray's Inn lane.

Jane, now she had conciliated Kate, would very much have preferred passing the rest of the day and the evening with her; and was very anxious, recently as she had been married, that her husband should go and transact his business with Mr. P., as he called him, and make her excuses to Mrs. P.; but he frowned and shook his head, and said that they had prepared for their reception, and it would be a sad disappointment to P., and Mrs. P., and all the P.'s, if Jane did not go according to her promise, to fulfil an engagement which he had prudentially made, and she had gladly accepted, at a period when their entire reconciliation with the Maxwells, if even possible, was not considered probable.

The critics who have favoured the predecessors of this tale with their notice, have been pleased to censure and ridicule the frequent recurrence in their pages to the dinners of the characters engaged, and the minute descriptions of the little peculiarities thereupon attendant. These discussions, however much found fault with, I beg to defend; inasmuch as England is a dining nation, and her people a dining people—as, indeed,

Voltaire (no mean authority) said long ago. What *is there in* the way of show, of ceremony, of association, of charity, of pleasure, of conviviality, of business, in England, which *is* unaccompained by a dinner? The coronation itself concludes with a dinner—is not the King's speech first promulgated to the members of either house of parliament after dinner?—can vestries transact parish business without dining?—with high and low, with great and small, eating is the soul and spirit of English society.

Who that had not dined, and swallowed wine enough to digest his dinner, could make the speeches which we see reported as having been delivered at tavern meetings? Why did Sir George Saville himself, after attending Crown and Anchor banquets for years, in furtherance of his great passion for freedom, at length grow so disgusted with the undivided application of his colleagues and followers to those periodical feastings, as at last to declare it his opinion, that since they eat so much and did so little in the cause, they ought, instead of supporters of the bill of rights, to be called supporters of the bill of fare?

What would be my lord mayor's show, if it were not for the dinner? The dinner is the sugar after the physic; nay, the propensity is not confined to human beings in the metropolis, nor to the mere pleasure of eating—the delight of *seeing* others eat is characteristic of a true Briton, and accordingly we find the galleries of tavern-rooms crammed with the spectators of dinners, and find that at Pidcock's menagerie an extra sixpence is charged for leave to look at the lions while they are feeding; in short, Life in London would be a dull work unless illustrated with *plates*.

If this be the case, how shall a man attempt to describe London life, or life any where in England as it is, without talking of dinners: follow the banker or the merchant into his smoky shop, or accompting-house, in some narrow lane in the city—there he is, in his dimly-lighted den, hovering about with a pen behind his ear, pale and wan, like the wax-work in Westminster Abbey, dead and dressed; at half-past seven see him dining, the bright lights reflected from the shining dishes, his pallid countenance is absolutely illuminated, and joke and jest flow from his lips while he sits and enjoys his *entrée*, and sips his sillery. Look at the wholesale trader, gloomy in his warehouses, cursing tallow for being dull, praying that saltpetre may look up, or that madder may be quoted as per last; what is he at dinner-time? he flings tallow and care behind

im; saltpetre and madder never enter his head; he is all niles and good nature, and looks, by ten o'clock at night, as he would lend his neighbour a hundred pounds to save him om hanging—next morning the tallow and the madder prevail gain, and he is as dull and disagreeable as ever.

The lover who is making the amiable, flies to dinner, and its either near or opposite to her in whom all his hopes and vishes centre; the look unseen, the remark unheard by any save hemselves, are all given and taken so well at dinner; a smile or a good wish comes conveyed in a glass of wine; and an offer itself sometimes explodes with a detonating motto.

See the farmer strike his bargains over fat bacon and cabage. Mark the tradesman coming into his shop from his parlour, smelling of onions, and chewing, as he comes, the ough mutton which he as yet has scarce had time to swallow. Go to the assizes—watch the care with which the judges' dinners are served, so as not to interfere with the condemnation of culprits or the convenience of jurors! In short, for where could we stop? eating is the universal employment of our countrymen, and, as has been before observed, so much time is devoted to the operation and occupied by it, and it is in fact so vitally interwoven with English society, that to give any thing like a faithful sketch of passing events, dinners must be served up on paper as well as in parlours.

What does that most admirable traveller, Fynes Moyrson, say in his interesting Itinerary? He says, "That one of the most important duties of all tourists is to observe the plenty of fishes or flesh, the kinds of meat or drink, with the sauces, and rare manner of dressing it." And one of the most curious parts of his narrative consists of these very descriptions. The reader shall judge for himself, taking it into consideration, that Fynes Moyrson's book was published in the year of our Lord 1617.

He tells us "that the diet of the Germans is simple and very modest, if you set aside their intemperate drinking; they commonly serve to the table sour cabbages, which they call *craut*, and beer, or wine (for a dainty) boiled with bread, which they call *swoope*. They use," says he, "many sauces, and commonly sharp, and such as comfort the stomach, offended with excessive drinking; for which cause, in Upper Germany, the first draught is commonly of wormwood wine, and the first dish of little lampreys (which they call nine auger, as having nine eyes), served with white vinegar; and them that take any journey commonly in the morning take a little brant-wein (that is their *aqua vitæ*), and eat a piece of pliffer kirchen (that is ginger-

bread); and as they have abundance of fresh fish in their p and rivers, so they desire not to eat them unless they see t alive in the kitchen; and they prepare the same very savou commonly using aniseeds for that purpose, especially the l fish, whereof they have one most delicate kind, called smer which in Prussen I did eat, first choked, then sodden in and they being very little, yet sixty of them sold for nin *grosh.*"

"At Leipsic," says Moyrson, "for *mere curiosity*, I pro myself to be invited to a marriage feast in one of the chie zens' houses. The marriage was in the afternoon, a supper they served in a piece of roasted beef, hot, and a cold, with a sauce made with sugar and sweet wine; the served in a carp, fried, then mutton roasted, then dried prepared with butter and cinnamon, and therewith a pi broiled salmon, then bloated herrings, broiled, and lastly, of bread like our fritters, save that it is made in long ro more dry, which they call *fastnach kuchen*, that is, Shrc baking, together with cheese; and then," adds Fynes a sort of sorrowful reproach, "thus with seven dishes senator's nuptial feast ended, without any flocks of fi change of fishes, or banquetting stuff which other natior only was endless drinking."

"Whole barrels of wine (bushels of apples, pooh, were brought into the stove and set by us on a table, was so placed, as, after two hours, no man in the compan in case to give account next morning what he did, said, c after that time. To nourish this drinking they used to e meats, which being (upon ill disposition of my body) on pleasing and unwholesome for me, and I complaining t to my host, he, between jest and earnest, replied that t of salt was commended in Scripture, alleging that text: all your speeches be seasoned with salt,' and then, sa 'much more should our meats be thus seasoned.' Sa pleasureth their palate because it makes the same dry, a vokes the appetite of drinking. For which cause also they meet to drink, as they dine with dried pork and be vily salted, together with cheese, sharp like that of Par when the cloth is taken away they have set before the beans, water-nuts (which I did see only in Saxony), an of bread cut into shives, all sprinkled with salt and p the least bit whereof will invite him to drink that ha need."

Whether this quaintness of Fynes Moyrson, which I c

I think almost as delightful as that of Pepys himself, may be as entertaining to others as it is to me, I cannot pretend to say; but such an author dilating upon dinners is incalculably amusing—his account of the attachment of the Germans to their pigs, I cannot find it in my heart to omit in this place.

"To say truth," says Fynes, "pork dried, or bacon, is so esteemed of the Germans, as they seem to have much greater care of their hogs than of their sheep or other cattle, for in the morning when they turn them forth, they scratch them with their fingers, *as barbers do men's heads*, and bless them that *they* may safely return; and in the evening when they are to come back with the herd, a servant is commanded to attend them, who washeth the dust from them as they pass by the fountain."

Moyrson, in fact, characterizes all the nations he visits as I would fain do, classifying the different grades of society by their fare and food, and their modes of dressing and eating it. The Italians, the light-hearted, sweet-voiced Italians, he paints as rejecting with horror all the *cochonneries* of Germany. "Their tables," says he, "are spread with white cloths and flowers, and fig-leaves, with ingestars, or glasses of divers coloured wines set upon them; at the latter they touch no meat with the hand, but with a fork of silver or other metal, each man being served with his fork, a spoon, and a glass to drink." This expression of agreeable surprise on the part of the observant Fynes, fully corroborates the history of Furcifer Coryat and his friend Whittaker, and only proves that the exquisite Sir Philip Sydney, and the accomplished queen, his mistress, sympathetically tugged at their rump-steak breakfast with their fingers; and that Sir Christopher Hatton, "so remarkable for turning out his toes," has many a time and oft, played "pully hauly" with a maid of honour, at a tough leg of mutton in the royal palace. Conceive the delicate, amiable, persecuted, royal Mary Queen of Scots, in her lonely loveliness, eating with her fingers her last steak, the day before she received her ast chop.

But Moyrson explains how it is possible to eat with a fork; or he says, "as they serve small pieces of flesh, and whole oints *as with us*, so their pieces are cut up into small bits *to e taken up* with the fork, and they seeth the flesh till it be ery tender. They use no spits to roast meat, and feed much pon little fishes and flesh, cut and fried with oil."

All this Major Overall would have enjoyed, since it was one f his wonderful, magnificent, astonishing, curious boasts, that

at Florence, he could scoop more comfort out of five hundred a year, than he could in London out of as many thousands—a carriage and servants, a suite of apartments, with marble floors and columns, an opera box, and sallad, and macaroni for the whole season, served as well as at the table of his Eminence with the red stockings, whose little black-eyed *niece* was so particularly partial to him.

"The French," says Moyrson, "are said to excel others in boiled meat, sauces, and made dishes, vulgarly called '*quelques choscs*.'" Kickshaws, I presume was the *proper* word—but says Fynes, "in *my* opinion the larding of their meat is not commendable, whereby they take away all variety of taste, making all meats savour of pork, and the French alone delight in mortified meats—they use not much whole meats, nor have I tasted there any good butter, which our ambassadors caused to be brought with them out of England."

"By the way," he says, "in Saboay, they have no butter, but use in the stead thereof, a certain white matter called smalts." "The French," he adds, "dine most with sodden and liquid meats, and sup with roasted meats, each having his several sauce."

"As in all things," says he, "the French are cheerful and nimble, so the Italians observe, that they eat or swallow their meat swiftly, and add, that they are also slovenly at meat, but I would rather say they are negligent, or careless, and little curious in their feeding. And to this purpose I remember an accident that happened to a Frenchman eating with us at the master's table, in a Venetian vessel governed by Greeks, and sailing from Venice to Jerusalem, who *turning his foul trencher, to lay meat on the clean side*, did so offend the master and all mariners, as well the best as common sort, as they hardly refrained from offering him violence."

Moyrson speaks of the peculiar luxury of clean sheets at an inn in France, and observes, moreover, that in the confines of Flanders, every passenger has a *glass to himself*, "for," says he, "the French are curious not to drink in another man's cup;" and he further adds, that it is an understood thing, that if you are at an inn where the landlord gives clean sheets, you are to dine at his house always—but even then he says the chambers have generally three or four beds, and these never tenanted by one traveller. With bells to ring for servants, Moyrson is quite fascinated,—in short, he is so delightful in his innocence, and so instructive in his minuteness, that I could go on quoting as long as I could sit reading him; but I beg par-

don for this digression, which is attributable first, to my affection for Fynes, and secondly, to the gratification I felt in finding so clever a man considering the table the test of society. This, however, being the case, and eating as common to every human being as his mouth, it is clear the modes and manners of performing that necessary operation must vary about as much, and, as I take it, are as indicative and characteristic of the different classes of society, as Mr. Deville the lamp-maker tells us lumps and bumps are, under other circumstances. The kitchen evinces a greater difference of rank than the drawing-room, and in giving the strong outline of a family, a much more clear and decided opinion may be formed of their manners and qualities by a sketch of their dinner-table, than of any other part of the *menage*.

I have said this much to show, that in a family like Mr. Palmer's, the non-arrival of the "company" would have been a severe disappointment. Mrs. Overall was known to be a *lady* of fortune, used to every thing "nice and comfortable;" she kept her own carriage, her men servants and all that: and therefore they must be very particular, and have every thing uncommonly nice for *her*—and so Miss Palmer, the night before, had a white bason of hot water up into the parlour to bleach almonds, with which to stick a "tipsy cake," after the fashion of a hedgehog, and Mrs. Palmer sent to the pastry-cook's for some raspberry jam, to make creams in little jelly glasses, looking like inverted extinguishers; and spent half the morning in whipping up froth with a cane whisk to put on their tops like shaving lather. And Miss Palmer cut bits of paper, and curled them with the scissors, to put round the "wax ends" in the glass lustres on the chimney-piece, and the three-cornered lamp in the drawing-room was taken out of its brown holland bag, and the maid set to clean it, on a pair of ricketty steps; and the cases were taken off the bell-pulls, and the picture frames were dusted, and the covers taken off the card-tables, all in honour of the approaching *fête*.

Then came the agonies of the father, mother, and daughter, just about five o'clock of the day itself, when the drawing-room chimney smoked; and apprehensions assailed them lest the fish should be overdone; the horrors excited by a noise in the kitchen as if the cod's head and shoulders had tumbled into the sand on the floor; that cod's head and shoulders which Mr. Palmer had himself gone to the fishmonger's to buy, and in determining the excellence of which, had poked his fingers into fifty cods, and forty turbots, to ascertain which was

firmest, freshest, and best; and then the tremor caused by the stoppages of different hackney coaches in the neighbourhood, not to speak of the smell of roasted mutton, which pervaded the whole house, intermingled with an occasional whiff of celery, attributable to the assiduous care of Mrs. Palmer, who always mixed the sallad herself, and smelt of it all the rest of the day; the disagreeable discovery just made that the lamp on the staircase would not burn, the slight inebriation of the cook, bringing into full play a latent animosity towards the housemaid, founded on jealousy, and soothed by the mediation of the neighbouring green-grocer, hired for five shillings to wait at the table on the great occasion.

Just as the Major and Mrs. Overall actually drove up, the said attendant green-grocer, the Cock Pomona of the neighbourhood, had *just* stepped out to the public-house, to fetch "the porter." The door was of course opened by the housemaid. The afternoon being windy, the tallow candle which she held was instantaneously blown out, at the same instant the back kitchen door was blown to, with a tremendous noise, occasioning, by the concussion, the fall of a pile of plates, put on the dresser ready to be carried up into the parlour, and the overthrow of a modicum of oysters in a blue basin, which were subsequently, but with difficulty, gathered up individually from the floor by the hands of the cook, and converted in due season into sauce for the before mentioned cod's head and shoulders.

At this momentous crisis, the green-grocer (acting waiter) returned with two pots of Meux and Co.'s Entire, upon the tops of which stood heads, not a little resembling the whipped stuff upon the raspberry creams,—open goes the door again, puff goes the wind, and off go the "heads" of the porter pots, into the faces of the refined Major Overall, and his adorable bride, who was disrobing at the foot of the stairs.

The Major, who was a man of the world, and had seen society in all its grades, bore the pelting of this pitiless storm with magnanimity and without surprise; but Jane, whose sphere of motion had been somewhat more limited, and who had encountered but very little variety either of scenery or action, beyond the every-day routine of a quiet country house, enlivened periodically by a six weeks' trip to London, was somewhat astounded at the noise and confusion, the banging of doors, the clattering of crockery, and the confusion of tongues, which the untimely arrival of the company and the porter at the same moment, had occasioned; nor was the confusion

less confounded by the thundering double knock of Mr. Olinthus Crackenthorpe, of Holborn Court, Gray's Inn, who followed the beer (which, as Shakspeare has it, "was at the door,") as gravely and methodically as an undertaker.

Up the precipitous and narrow staircase were the Major and Mrs. Overall ushered, she having been divested of her shawl and boa by the housemaid, who threw her "things" into a dark hole, ycleped the back parlour, where boots and umbrellas, a *washing* stand, the canvass bag of the drawing-room lamp, the *table* covers, and "master's" great coats, were all huddled in *one* grand miscellany. Just as the little procession was on the point of climbing, Hollingsworth the waiter coming in, feeling the absolute necessity of announcing all the company himself, sets down the porter pots upon the mat in the passage, nearly pushes down the housemaid who was about to usurp his place, and who in her anxiety to please Mr. Crackenthorpe (who was what she called a nice gentleman), abandons her position at *the* staircase, and flies to the door for the purpose of admitting *him*; in her zeal and activity to achieve this feat, she most unfortunately upsets one of the porter pots and inundates the little passage, miscalled the hall, with a sweeping flood of the aforementioned mixture of Messrs. Meux and Co.

Miss Engleheart, of Bernard-street, Russell-square, who had been invited to meet the smart folks, because she was a smart *person* herself, arrived shortly after; indeed so rapidly did she, *like* Rugby, follow Mr. Crackenthorpe's heels, that he had but just time to deposite his great coat and galoches (in which he had walked from chambers) in the black hole where everything was thrust, before the lovely Charlotte made her appearance.

Here, then, at length, was the snug little party assembled, and dinner was forthwith ordered; Miss Engleheart made the amiable to Mrs. Overall, who was received by both the young ladies with all that deference and respect which the formidable rank and title of wife commands. The three ladies sat together; Mr. Palmer performed fire-screen with his face to the company, and Major Overall, having first looked at Crackenthorpe for about five minutes, with an expression of countenance indicative of thinking him capable of cutting a throat or picking a pocket, at length disturbed the *tête-à-tête* which that respectable young lawyer was carrying on with the head of the house.

Mrs. Palmer at this period suddenly disappeared to direct the "serving up," and regulate the precedence of butter-boats, and the arrangements of the vegetables, which were put down

to steam on the dinner-table in covered dishes, two on a side; a tureen of mock turtle from Mr. Tiley in Tavistock-Place, being at the bottom, and our old friend the cod's head and shoulders dressed in a horse-radish wig, and lemon-slice buttons at the top. An oval pond of stewed calves' head, dotted with dirt balls, and surrounded by dingy brain and egg pancakes, stood next the fish, and a couple of rabbits, smothered in onions, next the soup. In the centre of the table towered a grotesque pyramid, known as an epergne, at the top of which were large pickles in a glass dish, and round which hung divers and sundry cut-glass saucers, in which were deposited small pickles and lemons, alternately dangling gracefully. At the corners of the table were deposited the four masses of vegetable matter before mentioned, and in the interstices a pretty little saucer of currant-jelly, with an interesting companion full of horse radish; all of which being arranged to her entire and perfect satisfaction, Mrs. Palmer again hurried up to the drawing-room, as red as a turkey cock, in order to appear as if she had been doing nothing at all, and to be just in time to be handed down again by the major.

The table was soon arranged; the major, on the right-hand of Mrs. Palmer, was doomed to be roasted by the flame of the fire; and the bride, on the right-hand of Mr. Palmer, was destined to be blown to shivers by the wind from the door. Mr. Crackenthorpe, who stood six feet three without his shoes, coiled up his legs under his chair, to the direful inconvenience of the green-grocer "daily waiter," who regularly stumbled over them whenever he approached his mistress on the sinister side, and much to the annoyance of Miss Charlotte Engleheart, who had long had a design upon the said Crackenthorpe for a husband, and who was in the habit of toe-treading and foot-feeling, after the custom of the tribes with whom she had been habituated to dwell.

Miss Palmer's whole anxiety was in the dinner; her heart was in the tipsy-cake, and all her hopes and wishes centered in the little jelly-glasses: divers and sundrys were the hems and winks which she bestowed upon the waiter, in order to regulate the putting down of the different little niceties; and the discovery which, shortly after the appearance of the second course, was made, that a trifle in a white wig of froth, which had superseded the big pickles on the top of the epergne, was considerably damaged by the dripping of oil from the lamp, which hung invidiously over it, nearly threw her into hysterics.

Vain were all the protestations of Mrs. Overall, that she

never ate trifle—vain were all the screams of the major, to reassure her—vain were the pleadings of Crackenthorpe, and the consolations of Miss Engleheart; "it was *so* provoking"—after all the pains, and the cakes, and the cream, and the wine, and the whipping—"dear, dear, only to think," and so on, which continued till the trifle itself was removed; when Emma left the room to follow the dear object of her love into the dark back parlour, where the dessert was laid out, and where the said trifle, amid papa's umbrellas, Mr. Crackenthorpe's galoches, and Mrs. Overall's boa, stood untouched, in order, if possible, to skim off the oleaginous matter which it had imbibed, before it sank through to the "nice rich part at the bottom," and to rescue some portion of the materials to serve up the next evening, when they expected a few neighbours to tea and supper.

It must be confessed, a more unsatisfactory afternoon never was spent; and poor Jane frequently recurred with regret to the agreeable society she had left. Even the Major, after he had astonished the natives with accounts of Rome, and Florence, and Naples—his fêtes to four hundred nobles, with a closet full of cardinals, and a boudoir full of princes—his details of the Neapolitan state coachmen, driving unhatted, in judges' full-bottomed wigs—Roman butchers in togas—vipers at Pæstum, robbers at Salerno, and fire-works in the eternal city, finding either that he was not understood, or, if understood, not believed, gave up the narrative and historical line, and took to listening; but he was there equally out of his element: the young ladies and Mr. Crackenthorpe talked about the play-houses, and Miss Engleheart seemed specially versed in the private histories of the most celebrated performers, and was acquainted with a family where she had met a gentleman, who had actually come out at one of the winter theatres in Jaffier.

Nothing requires greater tact in a man than to assimilate himself with the habitual conversation of those into whose society he may happen to be thrown: subjects which to one grade are of the most vital interest and importance, are to another race of people perfectly unintelligible; the diversion of a village pathway will furnish amusement and instruction to a party of country gentlemen, in whom the probable results of a Russian campaign or a Greek revolution excite not the slightest interest; and a set of sportsmen will discuss a fox-chase over a difficult country until they fall asleep, which would infuse a degree of opium into the ears of the town-bred cognoscenti,

sufficiently strong to send them to their slumbers long before the "tellers of the tale" had sunk under their labours.

Overall reckoned himself what, when he was at *Eton*, he would have called a dab, at this sort of adaptation of his mental powers; but he found himself, in Hunter-street, Brunswick-square, foiled at his own weapons, and beaten at his own game; for, although he did not know every thing that was going on in the world, the total ignorance of any thing actually stirring which his associates displayed, put him entirely *hors de combat*: while the bride, fatigued partly with travelling, and partly with anxiety and excitement, concomitant with her new character, could scarcely keep herself awake until the travelling carriage, made to go about the streets with a pair of job horses, was announced. Indeed, the Major himself, when he found the sort of person his *homme d'affaires* was at home, regretted not a little that he had not run the risk of offending him, and left his dear Jane to enjoy the society of her dear Katherine.

But something was to be elicited even in the deserts of Gray's-Inn-lane and the wilds of Brunswick-square. Mr. Crackenthorpe, a tall, bony, hatchet-faced young lawyer, either called, or about to be called forthwith to the bar, with a high aquiline nose, bristly light hair, swimming blue eyes, and huge white teeth,—a skeleton as to flesh, and in height a living slice of a sucking giant; in the course of conversation, mentioned the name of Somerford, a friend of his, with whom he believed Mr. Maxwell's family was acquainted.

Now the recurrence to Mr. Maxwell's family, under the circumstances, was not particularly agreeable to the Major in a mixed company; and although peace had that day been declared between the high contracting powers, it still bore the appearance rather of an armed neutrality, than that of an alliance offensive and defensive, as might have been wished; but when the minute Major observed the opposite two yards and a quarter of humanity actually in motion, apparently with the design of explaining deliberately, and at length, the particular circumstances of his intimacy with Lieutenant Somerford, his irritation became evident.

"I believe," said Crackenthorpe, coiling up his legs, and thus endeavouring to get nearer Jane, "I believe Somerford was at one time very intimate at Mr. Maxwell's—that was when they lived in Lincoln's-Inn-fields, I believe."

"I really don't know," said Mrs. Overall, evidently betraying by her manner that she knew all about it.

"I do," said Crackenthorpe. "Somerford and I were at school together; he was considerably my senior."

"Always," interrrupted the major. "I never heard any man speak of a school-fellow, who didn't make the same observation—curious—odd—strange—hey, Palmer!—wonderful! —surprising—eh?"

"And before he left Europe for India," continued the tall lawyer, "I think it was very nearly a match in that family—but your friend, as I take it, played the jilt a little."

"*Oh*, Mr. Crackenthorpe," said Miss Engleheart, how *can* you charge any young lady with such atrocity?"

"Atrocity!" said the lawyer, "a mere exercise of intelligence—surely a lady may be very fond of a person in her early youth, and yet see cause, as she grows up, to change her mind."

"I can't agree with you there," said Miss Engleheart; I think that a girl who—"

"Miss E., Miss E., my dear, here," said Mrs. Palmer, in a tremendous bustle, "my dear, would not you like a hand-screen, my love?"

"No, ma'am, thank you," said Miss Engleheart. "I say, Mr. Crackenthorpe, that a young woman engaged to be married to a—"

"Margaret, dear," said Miss Palmer, "where *did* you put *the* music of the—the—what do you call the thing?"

"Why," screamed the young lady, "one would think some of you here were inclined to deceive your swains, by the way you conspire to interrupt me."

"No, no," said Mrs. Palmer, "nobody wants to interrupt you, my dear child, only I thought the fire was too hot, and—ring the bell, Mr. P., we'll have those things taken away."

The blundering confusion by which the little denunciation of jilting, which Miss Engleheart was about to pronounce, was checked, created too much bustle to escape the Major; but even that might have blown over, had not Mrs. Palmer, as Miss Engleheart, tired of attempting to be didactic, was leading Miss Palmer to her seat, on a creaking music stool, before an upright Broadwood, gone up to the Major's lady, and taking her by both hands, whispered, "you musn't be offended, my dear Mrs. O., Miss E. knew nothing at all about *your* affair when she made her observations—only I thought it best to stop her in time, you know."

This clenched all, and Mrs. Overall turned from the benevolent mistress of the house with delight to the conversation of

Crackenthorpe, who proceeded to explain how very *deeply his* friend, Somerford, had been attached to *her* friend, Miss Maxwell, and how sorry he was to have heard of his death at the Cape of Good Hope; especially, as he had reason to believe, that some relation of his had expressed an intention of leaving him a very valuable property.

"I regret," said Jane, "to hear of the death of any person of whom I have heard such high and favourable opinions, and particularly at a time, when, as you appear to think, fortune seemed inclined to smile upon him. However, since you *have* touched upon the subject, which is an interdicted one at *Mr.* Maxwell's house, I believe that there never was any *change in* Miss Maxwell's feelings towards him; she obeyed the positive injunctions of her father, and consented to give up all hopes of him, but—"

"I thought you mentioned after dinner," said Mr. Crackenthorpe, "that Miss Maxwell was on the point of marriage—is *that* quite reconcileable with the character of an affection, *such* as you seem to think hers to have been."

"If you knew her," said Jane, "I think you could perfectly believe that it was. She established a line of conduct consonant with what she held to be her duty in obeying the commands of her father; several years, as many as seven or eight, have passed since she formed the resolution of conquering the attachment she had conceived, and she now consents *to unite* herself to a worthy and excellent man, upon a principle similar to that on which she relinquished Mr. Somerford."

"There is too much calculation in all that arrangement," said the long lawyer, "to promise any thing like happiness—a heart that can forget by order, and love by command, is not—"

"I did not say *that*," interrupted Mrs. Overall; "duty may decide a daughter to relinquish a loved object. I did not say she had forgotten him,—and duty may decide a daughter—"

"—To love another?" again interrupted Crackenthorpe.

"I did not say she *did* love him," replied Mrs. Overall. "I am as much of an enthusiast as you appear to be, in these matters, and where indifference exists between two people so connected as man and wife, something more than indifference is likely to ensue."

"Why, then, according to your theory, Miss Maxwell has no pleasing prospect," said the lawyer.

"She is secure from those evils to which a person of weaker intellect might be subject," said Jane: "well regulated and

excellent as her mind is, and firm as are her principles, there is nothing to be feared for her, or the man she marries. He, on the other hand, is a well-meaning, honest, honourable person, full of integrity and common-sense; he neither expects nor could comprehend that sort of ardent love to which you refer."

"My dear Jane, the carriage has been here these ten minutes," whispered the major, having roused himself from a sort of waking slumber, for that purpose, and moreover, because he heard his bride lecturing upon love, in a style somewhat too florid, and a manner somewhat too animated to be quite satisfactory to him as a bridegroom.

During the conversation between Mrs. Overall and Crackenthorpe, which began at length to be rather interesting, inasmuch as it gave the lady an opportunity to descant, and that too upon a subject with which she was intimately connected; Miss Engleheart had been accompanying Miss Palmer in the beautiful English song of "Bid me discourse." Indeed if these young ladies had not kindly begun their music, there would have been no conversation at all; and although Mr. and Mrs. Palmer watched the performance with all the natural anxiety of parents who pay for education, and in silence, perfectly consistent with their admiration of the result, Crackenthorpe and Mrs. Overall were too much used to the ways of society, to lose the opportunity of the singing to talk, and the major was by far too independent, too tired, and too fond of Italy, to do any thing but dose as well as he could under the influence of the disagreeable noise which the two young ladies were making; while the poor things themselves, as far as they were personally concerned, would have given the world not to have been asked to exhibit their little winning ways before the visiters,—she who accompanied being too much alarmed ever to keep with her friend who sang, and she who sang, trembling too much ever to shake, which, when she was not frightened, she could do as well as Catalani—at least, so one person in Bernard-street, Russell-square, had said and thought.

"We must wait till Miss Engleheart has finished her song," whispered Jane.

"Oh! she is singing, is she?" said the major—"oh! certainly."

"I still contend," said Crackenthorpe, who thought the major's interruption of his conversation with Mrs. Overall extremely ill-bred,—"that Miss Maxwell will be extremely wrong

to unite herself with her present lover, if, at least, she have a community of feeling with you, who are her friend."

"We think alike upon several points," said Jane, "but not on all."

"Miss Maxwell has a brother, I believe," said Crackenthorpe, "who either is or has been studying, as it is called, for the bar."

"Yes," said Mrs. Overall, blushing all over her cheeks and neck; "a very excellent, amiable, young man—he—I—that is—I have a very high regard for him."

"I don't know him myself, 'personally,'" said Mr. Crackenthorpe, "but I have heard him spoken of frequently—*idle*, I believe, professionally speaking; careless, as rich men always are, who threaten to become lawyers—and rich I am told he will be."

"I believe, very well off," said Jane; "his father has been so long eminent in his profession, and—"

"Ah! but, besides that," said Crackenthorpe, "there is some cousin of his, in the country, who is very rich, I believe; but the difficulty is to get him to marry her, for I am told she is not exactly presentable in London society—at least as he thinks—a sort of dowdy dawdle. I heard a great friend of the family, Mr. Godfrey Moss, describe her one day I dined where he was, and we were discussing the Maxwells, without knowing how intimate Mr. Moss was with them: and nothing, *to be* sure, *is* so awkward, as beginning a discussion about a set of people with somebody, who, perhaps, is particularly interested about them."

"Yes, it is—it is very disagreeable," stammered Mrs. Overall;—"the music, I believe, is over; I must obey my lord and master—I—"

And up got Mrs. Overall, hardly knowing whether she stood upon her head or her heels, to seek her husband to send for her boa (which, in those days, was called a tippet,) and her shawl; and, burning with agitation and shivering with horror at her own story, which had been so unconsciously detailed by her new and communicative friend, the discomfited bride beat a speedy retreat, and was handed down the little ladder to the little hall, by Mr. Palmer, who expressed a thousand delights at having had the honour of her company; while the major's shrill exclamations of "charming—kind—magnificent—snug—comfortable" were resounded through the whole building. Buttoned up in the carriage, up went the glasses, up jumped Walker into the rumble, and away went the horses.

When Mr. Palmer returned to the drawing-room he found Mrs. Palmer in a serious agony, the girls laughing heartily, and Mr. Crackenthorpe, with his head above the lamp, making a sort of serio-comic face of despair. They had just informed him of the nature of the connexion which was to have existed between Mrs. Overall and Ned Maxwell, and enough of the outline of the story to prove that if he had been dropping shot into the ears of the bride, he could not more effectually have agonized her. Miss Engleheart, in turn, became shocked at the errors she was told *she* had committed in censuring jilts, but reconciled herself by this question,—how should *she* know any thing about the private affairs of the Maxwell family? And in truth there would have been very little in her blunders, if Mrs. Palmer, with the sweet anxiety so natural to the tribe of dealers in matter of fact, had not undertaken to soothe away the unintentional allusions which, had they remained unexplained, would never have been considered any allusions at all.

Crackenthorpe, discomforted, prepared for retreat; not, however, before he had pronounced an eulogy upon his late lamented friend Somerford—upon that individual, whose name "once familiar," as the popular Bayly has it, Miss Maxwell had forbidden herself to speak. By the account which might have been gathered of his merits and virtues, the late Lieutenant Somerford must have been a very paragon of perfection, and it would have appeared miraculous that Maxwell, indulgent father as he was, should have so peremptorily insisted upon his dismissal, if it had not been also recorded in history that the lieutenant was pennyless. His commission was his fortune, and Maxwell, when Katherine was sixteen, designed her for a duchess. Time, and the disappointment of her fondest hopes, had, however, reduced her pretensions; she sank annually in attraction; and during the last two years, her fall had been so rapid, that she had settled in the Stock Exchange; and, from the golden circlet with the strawberry leaves, the splendid equipage, and endless train of servants, she had descended to contentment in Burlington Gardens, with a city husband and one pair of job horses.

The little party at Mr. Palmer's dissolved. Mr. Crackenthorpe re-embarked his long feet in his capacious galoches; Miss Engleheart was littered up in the straw of a hackney coach, which her pa's foot-boy had brought for her; and the family of P.'s were speedily locked in balmy sleep; to which happy state, however, none of the party were reduced until

they had seriously and separately thought over the previously curious *contretemps* of the evening; Mr. and Mrs. Palmer having re-discussed the dinner in detail, counted up the cost and charges, and lamented in vain the oily current which had spoiled the trifle—"*Parva læves capiunt animos*;" but this feast to them was nothing trifling—that they gave such an entertainment the reader should rejoice, because, if they had not done so, he never would have known the name of Miss Maxwell's favoured lover, nor have received such authentic intelligence of his melancholy decease.

CHAPTER IX.

"As skilful surgeons cut beyond the wound,
To make the cure more certain."

TOBIN.

So, then—the secret—that is to say, Miss Maxwell's secret, has been divulged, and the "once-familiar name" disclosed to the reader. As so much is known, perhaps it will be right to let the reader know a little more.

Somerford, then, was the son of a medical practitioner, whose success had not been perhaps equal to his merit, which was of the quiet, unpretending, and laborious school. In early life, the elder Somerford and Maxwell had been very intimate, but Somerford's habits did not assimilate with those of his fellow pupil. In person plain, and in manners simple and unrefined, he failed to please where he was introduced; and although his skill was undoubted, his opportunities of exhibiting it were few; and after many vain attempts in London to rise above the current which seemed to set against him, he died a suburban practitioner on a very small scale, leaving a widow and a son, Charles Somerford, who, during his youth, had been the constant associate of Katherine Maxwell, and almost the constant inmate of her father's house.

When the elder Somerford died, and the confined income of his widow, and the almost destitute state of the young man became known to Maxwell, he exerted the interest he possessed in some high quarters, and procured him an ensigncy in the army, anxious at once to provide for the son of an old friend,

and, to say truth, to get rid of a person for whom it was but too clear, even for his paternal eyes to doubt, his daughter had formed a most ardent and enthusiastic attachment. The regiment to which Mr. Charles Somerford was appointed, was at Calcutta, and had only just gone to India: its return, therefore, could not be anticipated under eighteen or twenty years; and although this might seem something like banishing the lad, yet he felt satisfied with the conduct he was pursuing, by establishing what Apperton would have called an "account current" in *his mind*, between the cruelty of separating young Somerford *from* his daughter on the one hand, and the kindness and benevolence of providing for him in an honourable profession, on the other.

When the announcement of the success of Maxwell's application was made, it was received by the young people as the death-blow to their mutual hopes. Somerford, whose education had been of the best, whose disposition was the kindest, and whose talents were really of the first order, was so identified by Kate with all her happy hours, and all her agreeable pursuits, that a separation from him was the very bitterest event which had marred the brightness of her yet short life. She had then a mother living, and in *her* kindness and sympathy, it is true, she felt some consolation; but it was poor indeed. The die, however, was cast.

Maxwell, too, clearly saw the dismay which the happy issue of his suit at head-quarters had caused in the young people; but he resolved *not* to see it. If Somerford was now driven to an acknowledgment of his feelings, he must, of course, exert his authority, and so put an end to the affair; because, if at any time he might have been disposed to listen to the supplications of his daughter to permit so imprudent a match, now the thing would be beyond madness,—since the young man was about to quit England for years, and must, of course, deprive her fond parents of an affectionate daughter's society.—Maxwell, not stopping to consider that the last-mentioned objection was raised by himself; or if he did consider, not choosing to admit that the principal reason for his selecting the army as the profession of a *protégé* whose education had been finished for other pursuits, was, that he might banish him from the society of his daughter, who, as I somewhere else have said, his wife and himself then intended for a dutchess.

When Maxwell had arranged all the preliminaries for the departure of Somerford, he took care to manage so that his daughter and the young soldier should not enjoy the satis-

faction of a parting interview; he dreaded the effects of such a separation upon her sensitive mind, and arguing prudently that needless pain can do no good, contrived that Mrs. Maxwell and Kate should go for three days on a visit to some friends in Kent, while he busied himself with the exportation of the ensign, whom he never suffered to be out of his sight until he had carried him, in the most affectionate manner, in his own carriage down to Portsmouth, and actually seen him take possession of his berth in the after-cabin, which had been secured for him on board the honourable company's ship, Mulligatawny, Captain Rice—in which huge ark Maxwell left him, and retracing his steps to London, arrived at his house exactly in time to receive his wife and daughter on their return from the country.

It so happened, that the wind chopping round to the "norrad" of east, the Mulligatawny got under weigh that very evening; bearing in her huge bosom Ensign Somerford, who, being in a state of utter dependance upon Maxwell, was prevented by a kind of nervous apprehension which such unfortunate people feel, from even expressing a wish about Kate, or complaining of the extraordinary manner in which he had been kidnapped or smuggled away, without one word at parting.

Maxwell, over and above the fear he expressed lest the delicacy of Kate's constitution, and the sensitiveness of her disposition should be injured by the agitation of a last interview with the young soldier, anticipated some direful results of a different nature from such a meeting. He knew that, with all the delicacy and timidity which are the sweetest attributes of her sex, Kate possessed a firmness of principle, and a feeling of right, so strong and powerful, that if, in the last few minutes of her association with the ensign, any promise of fidelity had been required, or any pledge given, he was convinced no power on earth would have shaken her resolution in abiding by it. This sort of engagement a woman keeps inviolable, even although she sees no prospect of its happy termination. Hundreds of hearts have been broken, and hundreds of lives have been sacrificed, by the rigid adherence to a faith once plighted. Maxwell, by cunningly taking the young couple unawares, prevented the mischief; and accordingly, as we have just seen, he put the youthful warrior *hors de combat*, as far as concerned the amatory campaign which he had too successfully conducted in the surgeon's house in London.

But although the system pursued by Maxwell was more likely to be successful than any other, it was not quite in ac-

cordance with the general leniency of his character; nor did he, with all his knowledge of human nature, and of his daughter's disposition, quite correctly appreciate the effect producible by the unexpected removal of Somerford from their family circle—unexpected, perhaps, it can scarcely be called, because his appointment had been discussed, and various preparations made for his outfit and expedition; but the loss of him without parting was unexpected: and it was not till the whole evening and part of the day succeeding it, on which she and her mother returned home, had passed away, that the fact of his being *gone*—actually gone—eternally gone, was communicated to her.

Who but a being who has felt as *she* did, can describe the lightning flash of anguish which seemed to shiver her whole frame? It was a dream—it was false—it could not be reality—that she never, never more was to see Charles Somerford—the playmate of her childhood—the companion of her youth—the sharer of her heart. It was the first pang of real sorrow she had felt—it was the sundering of ties, of whose strength she herself was not before aware. It seemed as if her heart-strings had snapped.

Maxwell, whose scientific knowledge saved him from alarm for his daughter's physical security under the effects of her mental distress, contemplated the storm he had raised with more of satisfaction than regret. What he saw more fully convinced him of the wisdom of what he had done, and his attention was chiefly directed towards assuring his wife; whose natural alarm for the fate of her child was not unmixed with a feeling of something like reproach towards her husband for what appeared even to her, especially now she witnessed the results it had produced, a needless refinement of cruelty.

But there was a reason for Maxwell's extraordinary caution, and unusual severity of conduct in this particular instance, which, to the world at large will perhaps appear just. There *are* those to whom the distinction which gave birth to it, will seem harsh and cruel; but against laws which religion enforces and society obeys, they must not murmur loudly, let them feel never so deeply.

The mother of Somerford was the illegitimate daughter of some wealthy person, and had become acquainted with her late husband in the country, where he had passed some of the earlier years of his professional career. She still survived; but the fact that the individuals to whose guardianship she had been from infancy confided, were of a rank below the middling class of society, that her education had been extremely

limited, and that her parent, whoever he might be, had never been personally known to those people; the sums allowed for her subsistence having been transmitted by an agent, on condition that the child was to pass as theirs (to which deception the loss of an infant of their own, about the same period, was made subservient); and in that character she married the elder Somerford, then acting in a subordinate capacity in the town near which she resided; nor did he know that his wife was not the daughter of Thomas Woodley, the miller of Rayford, until on the death of her supposed mother, the old lady being (better late than never) conscience stricken on the point, stated *the* fact that Sophy was not *her* child, and that the six *hundred* pounds which Somerford received as her portion, *came not* from her honest Thomas, who never was worth *half* the money, but from the father of the girl.

The respectable Mrs. Woodley, who could not "die easy" without disburthening her mind of this secret, unfortunately however deferred her communications to so late a period of her existence, that when Somerford, who was at her bed-side, pressed her to name the father of his wife, she could not rally sufficiently to explain herself, and expired in his arms without satisfying his very natural curiosity.

Somerford's situation was curious—in the chamber of sickness and death, and where his wife was bending over the bed of her supposed parent, in the midst of his cares and anxieties for the safety of one so nearly connected with himself, and so dearly allied to his better half, he became suddenly and unexpectedly enlightened upon a subject, touching which his suspicions had never been in the slightest degree awakened; and, singular as it is to say, it is true that Sophy Somerford, from constant association with the Woodleys, had acquired unconsciously so many of their habits, and so much of their manner—not so advantageously to herself as might have been—that Somerford, deceived by this sympathetic resemblance, and ready, as all men and women are, to concede a "strong likeness" between parents and children, had reasoned himself—or perhaps looked himself—into believing, that his Sophy had her father's eyes to a turn, and, as Sheridan says, "her mother's chin to a hair."

After a reasonable period devoted to grief, and the performance of the last duties towards one, whom Sophy, even when she knew she was not her child, could scarcely bring herself to consider in any other light than a mother, the two Somerfords hunted every nook and corner of the old gentle-

woman's residence, in hopes of finding some trace of the parents to whom the self-imagined orphan was really indebted, under Heaven, for her existence—but in vain. The conditions of secrecy had been so faithfully observed, and so religiously fulfilled, that not a letter, not a memorandum, not a paper referring to the subject, could be discovered; indeed Woodley had for so many years been considered as the father of the girl, that, added to the natural fidelity and firmness with which he kept the secret, the wish of his heart was that *Sophy* herself should never be undeceived: and that his friends *and* relations and neighbours should alike remain ignorant of the real truth, and of how long he had been practising upon them a piece of deception.

That there *were* persons who could immediately enlighten Mr. and Mrs. Somerford upon the important point, there could be no doubt. Whether it was likely they would or would not, the couple most interested did not pretend to guess; but their speculations as to this intention or desire were very soon terminated.

Somerford and his wife, a few days after the funeral of his *soi-disant* mother-in-law, were seated by the fire in their humble home, the sorrowing Sophy having on her knee the identical Ensign Somerford of whom we are now treating, when the ostler's boy, belonging to the Green Dragon "up street," knocked at the door. The maid servant opened it, and Bill—familiar name—informed her, that a gentleman wished to see Doctor Somerford (so was the pale-faced stripling called in those parts) up at his master's house.

The fee-faw-fum feelings of poor Somerford were roused in an instant. A patient at the Green Dragon!—Not a moment was to be wasted. The traveller might die—or, perhaps, get well, before he reached him. In either case, a loss was to be dreaded; and, accordingly, great-coat on, and umbrella under arm, lint and lancets in pocket, off goes Somerford, leaving the future ensign and lover in a paroxysm of squalling, which not all the tender assiduities of his fond mother could assuage, and which made the small tenement they occupied ring again.

Bright visions beamed before Somerford's eyes as he paced, in the dark, towards the best inn. Some great person indisposed, might perhaps be cured by his skill and attention; and then, perhaps, he might take him by the hand, and then, perhaps, carry him to London, and bring him into fashion; then he might take his degree—and then set up his carriage—be made physician to some illustrious personage—and—with which

step in the ladder of his life, he reached the Green Dragon—where, in a very few minutes, he found himself *tête-à-tête, with* one of the healthiest looking-persons he had ever seen, and whose disorder, if he had one, was not of that class which evince themselves by external symptoms.

"Mr. Somerford?" repeated the stranger, inquiringly, as the waiter announced the apothecary.

"Exactly so," said the apothecary.

"Mr. Somerford," said the stranger, "I am afraid I have disturbed you from your avocations, and called you, perhaps needlessly, from your home; but I—I—wished to ask *you a* question, which, perhaps, you will excuse me for putting to you, when I assure you I do so with the best possible intentions."

"Sir!" said Somerford, somewhat puzzled.

"I believe, Mr. Somerford," continued the stranger, "you married a daughter of Mr. Woodley, an inhabitant of this neighbourhood?"

Now was the current of Somerford's thoughts changed. Phials, physic, leeches, lint, and lancets all disappeared from his mind. No longer did he see in the newly-arrived traveller before him the patient seeking advice; in an instant he beheld the herald of his future fortunes, the man who was to inform him that his Sophy was the daughter of some great person *who*, for state reasons, had been hitherto immured in obscurity, *and* who, perhaps, had claims upon the thrones of half the countries in Europe.

"I did, sir," said Somerford—"that is to say, sir—I thought so, until the week before last."

"How d'ye mean?" said the stranger, somewhat moved.

"Why," added the apothecary, "then I came to understand that my wife was *not* the person she was usually taken for."

"Indeed!" said the stranger, evidently much agitated by this little bit of intelligence; "how were you undeceived?"

"Her mother," said Somerford, "that is, her supposed mother—"

"Stay, sir, let me see if the door is fast," said the stranger, walking to the said door, and opening it to ascertain that there were no listeners, and then closing it securely.

"As I was saying, sir," resumed Somerford, "her supposed mother—"

"I know," interrupted the stranger, "died about a fortnight ago—had you no suspicions before?"

"None."

"The father—that is, Woodley—then, never hinted such a thing?"

"Never," said Somerford.

"And the mother told you the whole story?" said the stranger.

"She did."

"Well, Mr. Somerford," said the stranger, with an increased show of courtesy, "it is upon *that* point I wished to speak to you. I suppose the old woman felt some scruples as to dying *and leaving* you in error."

"Exactly so," said Somerford.

"And you have, I presume, taken no steps in consequence of the disclosure," said the stranger.

"Steps!" said Somerford with his eyes very widely open.

"I mean, you have not mentioned the circumstance to any of your neighbours?"

"No," said Somerford—"I thought, and my wife thought *so too*, that we had better keep the affair secret, and see how things would turn up."

"You haven't, I know, made any application to the real father of Mrs. Somerford," said the stranger, "and we very much applaud your conduct, for it is as well to be explicit at once; the portion you received with your wife was stated at the time to Woodley, (who, of course, as if on his own part, *told you*,) to be the whole and last amount of what might be considered the charge upon her natural parent."

"I don't clearly understand, sir," said Somerford.

"I mean," said the stranger, "that when Woodley proposed giving his daughter, as you then supposed her, six hundred pounds, he gave you to understand that you were to expect nothing more."

"He did," said Somerford; "but we have received some small additional sum since the death of the widow."

"Now, Mr. Somerford," said the stranger, "although that was decidedly the understanding on the one part and the feeling on the other, it is not the wish of the person most intimately concerned in this affair rigidly to adhere to that determination; and since you have been put in possession of a secret (the developement of which, however, can be of no advantage to you or your wife), it will be the wish of that person to prove to you the needlessness of any application to him, by meeting your views in any moderate way, so as to render your situation in life more easy and comfortable than it may be now; and I must tell you in fairness, that your having abstained from using the

knowledge you have acquired, in a manner which might, particularly at this juncture, cause your best friend much inconvenience, has not been overlooked, but, on the contrary, is as I before said, duly appreciated."

"Why, sir," said Somerford, not at all seeing the powerful kick he was about to give his future good fortunes; "I could not, very well, have applied to any body, for although poor old Mrs. Woodley told me the secret of my wife not being *her* daughter, she, very unfortunately, expired, before she could explain to me whose child she really is."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the stranger, elevating his brows *into* a towering arch, and screwing up his mouth into the *smallest* possible circle, so as to produce an involuntary *whistle*. "Oh! then you are yet to learn whom your *best friend* is."

"Indeed, I am," said Somerford. "I married my wife because I loved her—I thought her name was Woodley; and it is not because she is called any thing else, sir, that I shall love her less, or cease to appreciate her good qualities. I have no right to be dissatisfied if her real parents never see her again; for those whom I thought, and whom she thought, were her parents, can never see her more on earth. The man whom I thought her father, I thought a suitable connexion for myself—he gave her a sum of money, which I considered a suitable portion for his daughter. To marry her, under all those circumstances, was the object of my ambition, and I succeeded. I gained all I wished for, and I wished for nothing more—and I am only sorry that the poor old gentlewoman said any thing about the matter, since it naturally unsettles my wife's mind, and renders her anxious upon a point about which I care nothing; all I would ask, is, if her father be alive and wealthy, that when I die, and die poor—(which I am sure I shall,) he will not forget *his* child or mine."

Tears trickled down the stranger's face, as the ingenuous Somerford thus spoke the honest feelings of his heart. He took him by both his hands, and pressed them fervently; but it was quite evident to the stranger, that such a man would live and die an unenriched apothecary.

"Mr. Somerford," said he, "you will lose nothing by this conduct."

"I confess," said Somerford, who did not appear conscious that he had said or done any thing particularly praiseworthy, by making his declaration, "I should like to be trusted with the secret, for I could keep it, and I—"

"We must discuss that farther," said the stranger. "How

miraculous that death should have intervened, to save the old woman from perjury—for she, like her husband, had been sworn to secrecy. And no paper, no document, nothing was left, by which the relationship can be traced ?"

"Not one atom, sir ?" said Somerford.

"Will you excuse me one moment ?" said the stranger. "I have a small packet of papers up-stairs, which I will confide to your care, on condition that you promise me not to open it, until you receive a written permission. I think I may venture so far, without infringing my instructions."

Somerford bowed assent, and the stranger proceeded to fetch the packet.

"This is very extraordinary," said Somerford to himself, as he stretched himself in one of the armed chairs before the fire —"this will do—fortune has at length slipped the fillet from her eyes, and sees my merits—how delighted Sophy will be ; and yet, perhaps, even now, I shall not know whose son-in-law I am. Poor old Woodley—and mother. Ah ! well—they are gone, and God bless them ; they were kind to me, and received me hospitably, when—no matter—I wish they had told me —but then they were bound to secrecy—sworn and so—psha !—every thing is for the best, and some day I shall be as well off as Alexander Maxwell, perhaps, who has often told me I should never *do*. We'll see—we'll see."

Somerford stirred the fire—footsteps approached—his heart beat—he might, in two minutes know all—at least—

The door opened, and Butley, the master of the house, appeared before him.

"Fine night, sir,—rather frosty," said the landlord.

"Very fine, Mr. Butley," said Somerford—"all your family quite well ?"

"All quite charming," said Butley—"never nothing the matter with them, thank God."

Somerford sighed—he was physician in ordinary to the Green Dragon.

"Strange gentleman that is," said Butley, "who sent the message to you."

"Strange !" said Somerford.

"Yes, he came here, and was in such a hurry to send, I thought he was ill. Is he quite right, sir ?"

"Right !" said Somerford.

"Ah ! isn't he a bit flightyish like ?" said Butley.

"Hush, hush," said Somerford ; "he'll hear us."

"Gad, he must have long ears if he does," said Butley; "I should think he's nigh five miles off afore now."

"How d'ye mean—is he gone?" said Somerford.

"What, didn't you know that?"

"Not I; I was waiting for him."

"You may wait long enough then," said Butley. "He came here on horseback, and could not have come very far by the look of him; his horse was waiting for him in the yard, and he set off up town as hard as he could lay legs to ground, when he came out of the room."

"I heard a horse gallop away," said the apothecary.

"That were he," said Butley; "he gave the waiter five shillings for the messenger, and the room, and the lights, and the fire, and all the rest of it."

"Do you know him?" asked Somerford.

"No, sir," said the landlord—"don't you?"

"Not I," replied Somerford; "he told me he had a packet of papers to give me, which was up-stairs."

"He never set his foot on a stair in this house," said Butley.

"Why, then, I may go," said Somerford, "and all the story of the packet and the papers was just made up to get rid of me."

"I hope if he didn't leave any thing behind him, sir," said Butley, "he did not take any thing away with him."

"No," said Somerford; "I had none of what he wanted, which was information—so, good night, Butley."

"Good night, sir," was the reply, and Somerford proceeded homeward to relate his adventure to his wife, who was anxiously waiting his return. What she heard served only the more to inflame her imagination, as to her birth and parentage, and the first cross word that ever fell from her lips since she was married, was a snub to her spouse "for letting the stranger know how little he actually knew himself."

A woman never commits herself on such points—she seems to trifle, while she proceeds steadily in her course, and gains all without conceding any thing; at least in the way of words. However, Somerford's contentedness and his avowal of unqualified delight in her society, soothed all, and after the supper of cold boiled mutton, and home-made pickles, served up at half-past nine, the doctor lulled his wife to drowsiness by reading, in the county newspaper, the details of the ceremony of the laying the foundation of the East India docks, the promotion of Dr. Bathurst to the bishopric of Norwich, and t

ommitment to the Tower of sheriffs Cox and Rawlins, for rtiality at the Middlesex election ; thus marking the period Mrs. Woodley's decease and the stranger's visit, (which curred in February, 1805, when Charles Somerford was bout six years old,) from which time to the hour of Somerord's death, the visiter never re-appeared, nor did they ever ear further tidings relating to him.

The year following, Mr. Somerford, finding the neighbourhood in which he resided too healthy for business, and having no tie to it since the death of the Woodley family, but rather, on the contrary, many reasons for wishing to quit it, shifted his quarters to the neighbourhood of London. Charles was placed at Westminster school, and had the run of Maxwell's house, in which, as I have already said, although his mother seldom visited it, he was an almost constant inmate.

After the termination of his school career, the pursuits of the young man were hardly decided upon, when in 1815 his father died ; and early in the following year he obtained the ensigncy, was shipped on board the Mulligatawny, and by his abrupt departure caused the scene from which I have ventured for a few minutes to withdraw the reader, in order to enlighten him as to some of the secrets of the Maxwell family, just resuming the thread of my narrative, as the young lady has recovered her senses.

To a girl of sixteen, as Kate was at the period of this young man's departure, the events of such a day are memorable indeed. The horror of the shock she received was registered in her mind, along with the still more impressive scene of her mother's death, which occurred a few years afterward ; and to those events she recurred daily, throughout the after-current of her life.

When she recovered sufficiently to be conscious of her actions, she still believed she had been told that Charles was gone, only to try her feelings for him. Indulged as she had been up to that period, she could not account for the unlooked-or severity with which she felt she had been treated upon this one occasion. She sought him in the different rooms of the house, called on his name—but she saw him not—he answered not—he was at that moment thinking of her, and her alone, in the boating tavern in which he was at once a resident and a voyager. In the drawing-room, she found some flowers he had gathered the day she quitted town ; they were still in the little vase where he had placed them ; every word he had uttered during the process of arranging them to please her, was

brought to her recollection. Neither Gray nor Feinagle could ever have established so perfect a system of mnemonics as Charles Somerford had thus created for the benefit of Katherine Maxwell. She gathered them up—pressed them fervently to her rosy lips, hid them in her panting bosom, and placed them in the inmost recesses of her writing desk—where—listen, ye sceptics—learn, ye unbelievers in woman's constancy—they rested, dried, shrivelled, colourless as they were, ay, even to the day before her marriage with Apperton, nearly ten years after.

I scarcely know how sufficiently to apologise to the reader, for having thus episodically taken him so far back in the family history. It was my intention never to have mentioned Somerford's name; but the communicative Mr. Crackenthorpe having blurted out so much, I felt it my duty to go the length of telling all I knew, although, since that learned gentleman, at the same period that he mentioned his former acquaintance with Kate's early friend and lover, announced his death, it may perhaps be thought somewhat superfluous. Never mind—if the reader will consent to go on with the narrative, he may perhaps find out that I *had* a reason for troubling him with the particulars which I have just had the pleasure to submit to his notice.

It can scarcely have been until this period of my story, that the reader has properly appreciated the peculiar situation of poor Katherine; and even when Mrs. Overall visited her the next morning, P. P. C., she, aware as she was of the real state of her feelings with respect to poor Somerford, felt considerably puzzled to know whether she should communicate the intelligence she had received of his death; which, although it would utterly kill the hopes which Kate had long ago herself resigned, would, at the same time, painful as it must be, leave her more free and unencumbered by a feeling (perhaps undefinable) which might increase her unhappiness, in fulfilling her father's favourite project of marrying his finance minister. Jane, after a mature and lengthened deliberation with herself, and a debate and consultation with her husband, decided upon breaking the fact to Kate as she had heard it, in which decision she was moreover strengthened, the following day, by her aunt, who, delighted to find that the Maxwells had set the example of reconciliation, had started, with four post-horses to her carriage, in order to grace the family circle, which clustered round the fire-side in Burlington Gardens.

To describe the conversation between Kate and Jane, since

its aim and objects are known to the reader, would only be to tire him with useless repetitions, and excite him perhaps by needless sorrow. Miss Maxwell received the news of Somerford's death, prepared as she had cautiously been by Mrs. Overall, with calmness and resignation; he had long been dead to *her*, and she even felt that his affections could not have been so strong, so genuine, or so lasting as her own, since she had received but two letters from him, even before her father put his solemn veto on their correspondence. Kate not thinking that *such* a father could upon such a point go the length of suppressing some of Charles's earliest communications, having satisfied himself by the contents of those, of the absolute necessity of extending the sphere of his authority to the farthest shores of India, in order to prohibit an interchange of sentiments, feelings, and protestations, which, if continued, he felt assured could terminate only in the discomfiture of all his schemes and speculations.

There is no grief so severe as that we are forced to conceal. The sigh which might give relief must be suppressed, the tear must be checked ere it falls, and all the deep-felt sorrow left to prey upon the heart and mind. Kate dared not even seem dejected on the day of the happy meeting of the family; even Godfrey Moss and his brother were expected to join the party at dinner-time; and, to add to her misfortunes, a favourable fluctuation in the shares of the Anglo-Siberian Snow-water Company had so exhilarated Apperton, that be was to be seen skipping about the room, ever and anon clapping his two hands together in exultation with horrible concussions, and exhibiting the most positive degree of friskiness in his gallantry towards his intended.

There was yet another whose spirits were forced on the occasion—and that was Ned Maxwell. He found himself the discarded lover of a girl whom he had affected to despise, and who, as I have said before, although so recently married, seemed, in assuming the title of wife, to have thrown off much of her embarrassment and silliness. The triumphant and self-complacent air of the major, the extraordinary kindness and civility with which he was treated by Jane's aunt, and indeed the perfect felicity of the whole group, not excepting Apperton himself, were too much for his nerves and spirits, especially as all his unceasing endeavours to get another sight of his beautiful vision had been unavailing—all this, added to the constant expectation of seeing the two Moss troopers arrive from the land of fens and fowl, full charged with provincial wit

and ready to raise a laugh against the defeated swain, made him appear as melancholy as his poor heart-worn sister *really* felt.

The day, however, passed over without the arrival of Moss and his brother; and the rein and a free course having been given to the little major, all farther trouble, except listening to his incessant squeak, was abandoned. He described and re-described, in the most animated colours, his palace at Florence, and his suite of rooms at Rome,—the often repeated delights of salad and maccaroni, the splendid equipage, and servants, opera box, and the corso at one, and the crowd at *his* receptions at the other; the glories of the Sunday fireworks in his roofless theatres, the squeeze of visiters in his saloon, magnificent, superb, wonderful, with six pair of red stockings on the staircase, and a boudoir full of princes.

When this tiresome jargon ceased, and the tender adieus were over, and all the company gone, and all the lights out, poor Kate stole to her room, and throwing herself on a chair beside the fire, hid her face in her hands, and wept copiously. The whole flood of her sorrow burst from her burning eyes, and she involuntarily sought and found the bunch of shrivelled broken flowers, which poor Charles Somerford had plucked ten years before—sad emblem now of his own fate!—Oh, that life could have been given to Charles by the sacrifice of hers—that she could see him once again—would she not give up years of existence?—and to think that she, in heart and soul a widow, should, within a little week, kneel before the sacred altar, and plight her faith and love to another—and such a one!

Now came too late the reflection that she had better have risked the negative displeasure of her father, and refused Apperton, than have linked herself for life with a being whom she could never fail to esteem, but whom she knew she never could love; for, strange as it may appear, now that her Charles was irretrievably gone, and that the remotest chance, the weakest ray of hope, was utterly extinguished by his death, she felt more remorse, and more agony of mind, at having suffered him to be supplanted if not in her heart, as he ought to have been, at least in her favour, than she even felt while he was yet alive, and might—but scarcely within the range of possibility—yet have claimed her as his own.

The hearts and feelings of women are so mysteriously constituted that it is impossible to account for their workings by any settled rule, or upon any fixed principle. Kate's sense of

duty and firmness of resolution raised her above the dangers and difficulties of the conflict she had consented to submit to. She had, because she thought it right, obeyed the wishes of that father who had thwarted her and killed her hopes; but it was his to command, hers to obey: and reflecting upon the superiority of his judgment over hers, at the time of Somerford's departure, and arguing upon the blindness which ardent lovers suffer under, she reasoned herself into a measure, the horror of which never so fully glared upon her, as at the moment when she found herself liberated by the death of her early lover from any dread of afflicting him, and utterly deprived of every hope of his regaining her.

Thus agitated, thus distressed, Kate remained until late in the morning, when, exhausted by the fatigue of sorrow, she fell asleep, and awoke to welcome the day which, by seven only, preceded that of her marriage with Apperton.

CHAPTER X.

Would I had met my dearest foe in Heaven,
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio.
My father!—methinks I see my father.
SHAKSPEARE.

"So, so, Master Neddums," said Godfrey Moss, as soon as he saw young Maxwell; "you see it has all come to pass—eh—the major has jockeyed you—eh—didn't I tell you so?"

"You did—and I believed you—and I care nothing about it," said Edward.

"Come, come, none o' your trash, Master Ned—won't do," said Moss. "How came you to go writing your crinkum-crankum love stuff to the cretur the very day she ran off, if you didn't want to marry her?"

"I wrote under a wrong impression," said Edward.

"Yes, that you did," replied Moss; "you wrote under the impression that she would have you,—not she. I knew when that little squeaking chap got down there, with his stiff neck-cloth, and his little foot, and all that jigamaree stuff, you had no more chance than a cat in a certain hot place without claws

—no more than I should have had; but I say, Ned, never mind she—have you heard about poor Charley Somerford?"

"I have," said Edward; "how did you hear any thing about it?"

"Your father told *me* he had heard of his death," said Moss: "does Kittums know it?"

"Yes, poor girl, she does," said Edward. "I was too young when he left England to remember much of him myself, and, of course, I can only judge of him as a child; yet I remember I was very fond of him; but, for heaven's sake, don't say a word upon the subject, for my father does not know that Kate has heard any thing about it—she told *me*, and so did my father, but the best thing to do is to take no notice one way or another."

"And so, Friday she is to be married," said Moss, taking one of his double allowance pinches of snuff; "well, as folks bake, so they must brew, but, if happiness comes out o' that—why,"—(another pinch)—"no matter—eh, Neddums, what's done can't be undone; and as the thing was to be, I am not quite sure that the young soldier chap's dying isn't the better for Kate."

Moss was one of the most agreeable companions possible, but, posted as he was during this conversation at the luncheon table, clearing the decanters of the several remnants of wine which lingered in their lower parts, his adhesiveness was remarkable, and Edward never felt his prolixity so powerfully as at the present moment, he being all anxiety to "go his rounds" of the metropolis, in search of, or rather in the vague hope of meeting, her whom he considered the arbitress of his fate, and to whom he was attracted by an irresistible power; it was, therefore, with infinite and indescribable delight that he beheld his old friend finish the last drop of the last bottle, well knowing that so soon as he had concluded his self-imposed task of *draining*—learned, perhaps, in Lincolnshire—he would rise as well as he could from his easy chair—shake the snuff out of the wrinkles of his coat—borrow Ned's arm, and roll himself along into the front drawing-room, where, having first disposed his legs upon a sofa, his snuff-box deposited with a book on a small table beside it, he would make his Kittums, as he called her, play him some of those airs, which, as he used to say, reminded him of foregone times;—for Godfrey had been a winner of hearts in his day, and, with all his outward contempt for sentiment and feeling, a tear would

sometimes stand in his eye, when he for a moment recurred to the events of his youth.

To this post having accordingly conveyed him, Edward hastened forth upon his daily pilgrimage. The legal cellars of Mr. Diveandpore were now wholly and entirely neglected, and exactly at the moment when the main stay of his idleness was cut by the marriage of his wealthy cousin, the young gentleman abandoned himself completely to the *belle passion*, and the pursuit of a phantom, which it seemed perfectly impossible *he* ever could grasp.

There are frequently presentiments and forebodings in the mind, which come to be verified under the most extraordinary circumstances. Edward Maxwell, who had never seen his incognita since the day after the arrival of the Overalls, when she caught his eye as he was handing the bride of his rival into his father's carriage, felt when he left home a sort of assurance that he should see her in the course of this morning's "patrol." The day was fine, the sky (for London) clear, the streets were thronged with lovely women, whose eyes sparkled with vivacity and intelligence, and whose cheeks glowed with English health and beauty. There was a fresh air, and all nature seemed in activity. That most splendid of European streets, the pride of our metropolis, Regent Street, was crowded with carriages and pedestrians, and Maxwell was borne as it were upon the tide of people which flowed towards the Quadrant. Here, searching in every direction the beloved object of his hopes, he crossed, and proceeded by Sackville Street into Piccadilly, along which great thoroughfare he continued his walk, associating in his mind the Green Park basin with the mysterious lady. It was there he had last spoken to her—he might possibly see her there again—in short, fate, or some other power quite incomprehensible by me, induced the love-stricken youth to wend his way in that direction.

The sudden fulfilment of an anticipation of this sort has a most extraordinary effect upon the mind, and it sometimes appears, when events happen in this manner, that they have actually occurred to one previously. I apprehend that I shall not be able to make the reader at all comprehend my meaning—perhaps the feeling I should wish to describe is peculiar to myself, and therefore I give it up. Suffice it to say, that the effect the appearance of the young lady herself, walking slowly by the side of the Green Park basin, produced upon Edward, was something almost magical. He could scarcely trust the evidence of his senses. However, beyond a doubt, there she

actually was. Now, had she come thither, as he had, because they met there once before?—She stopped—looked round, and was evidently waiting for somebody.

This show of assignation, as it seemed to Edward, immediately altered the course of his proceedings. He resolved not to exhibit himself suddenly to her eye—but to watch her movements—see if some more favoured swain joined her—and, whether such were the case or not, and she retired from the ground alone, to follow and trace her to her residence—a measure which, if not entirely consistent with good breeding, after his promise to the young lady herself, was considerably qualified, if not thoroughly warranted, by the *escapade* she had played off upon him at Charing-cross.

In order to effect his purpose with the greater security, the young general posted himself in the fruiterer's shop, between Clarges and Halfmoon Streets, and, like a sharp-shooter, hiding himself among the leaves and baskets of Messrs. Levy and Salmon, lay snugly watching the movements of the enemy in the field.

As his ambuscade is likely to last for some time, we will leave him in it, while we dispose of the Overalls and Mrs. Epsworth, to whose hotel Kate had gone after breakfast, for the purpose of seeing them start on their continental expedition.

The truth is, that the negative affection which Miss Maxwell had hitherto felt for her relation Jane had, in the *short* space of four-and-twenty hours, become nearly positive. The cause of this sudden change of temperature, the reader will, perhaps, find in the kind sympathy which Jane expressed for Kate, while relating to her the details which had reached her respecting poor Somerford's death. There was so much of good intention and good feeling in Miss Epsworth's conduct on the occasion, that Kate almost loved her for it; and, independently of the desire to see again and take leave of her cousin, Miss Maxwell could not help fearing that she had not made her gratitude to Jane sufficiently evident. These were some of the motives which carried the young lady from home immediately after breakfast; the others are indescribable, but perhaps intelligible to those who have fondly loved, and eternally lost the dear object of their affections.

Kate was in excellent time; the ponderous travelling carriage, yet horseless, stood before the door, and the Major's valet, conjointly with sundry waiters, were loading and cramming every available hole and corner of it with the different

necessaries of life, while Miss. Scrimshaw stood on the steps of the hotel, affecting to shiver with cold, holding two very small parcels of her lady's moveables, about to secure stowage of which, she was, or seemed to be, most particularly anxious.

Mrs. Epsworth, whose constitution was delicate, and could not bear London air (as the atmosphere of that foggy, smoky metropolis is generally but erroneously called), had made several desperate attempts upon her new connexion's good-nature, in hopes of being invited to join the happy couple in their continental tour ; but the major, polite as he was, and anxious always to meet the wishes of the "charming, magnificent, delightful, elegant, delishos crechurs," with whom he might be thrown in contact, was now married to Jane, and although she never spoke upon the subject of her "aunt's" going with them, her "aunt" had spoken of it to her, all of which the major knew as well as aunt or Jane themselves ; but his mind was made up ; a plump lady, as third, in a travelling chariot on a tour, is clearly *de trop*. Overall thought with the immortal deer-stealer of Stratford, that she would

"Their *quietus* make *as* a bare *bodkin* ;"

and had therefore resolved that on no account should her joining the party be permitted or allowed. And the major, who was a man of the world, was right ; for after the inconveniencies of close packing, and travelling in a mash, had been overcome, and they were comfortably settled down in their home, still the aunt would have been *de trop*. Nothing makes more mischief, or causes greater inconvenience in a *menage*, than a mother or aunt living with her married daughter or niece : she seems established in the house as a sort of equity judge, to defend the rights of the wife against the encroachments of the husband, and out of it she is considered as a domestic encumbrance, a necessary evil, who must be invited everywhere with her young relations. Besides, Mrs. Epsworth was a scion of the old school ; the wealth which had ascended to her niece had been accumulated by her husband as a merchant and he, having married young, married according to the circumstances of his youth, so that excellent as was her heart, and delicate as was her constitution, she would have made but a sad figure among the princes and princesses who were Overall's intimate friends on the continent ; and although she possessed all the cardinal virtues, she would have looked uncommonly odd in

a flirtation with an eminent pair of red stockings on a *staircase*.

Jane was of the next generation, and she knew *everything*—French and Italian were her ordinary mediums of conversation; in German she was a proficient, and as for accomplishments, she was actually finished, from the writing of epic poems, down to the commission of that lowest debasement of human intellect, called "oriental tinting," in the fulfilment of which, a great grown-up woman sits down at a table, and stumps brushes through holes cut in cards, and so makes up "pictures," as she calls them, of birds and flowers in all their natural colours, and fancies herself an artist and a genius.

Kate arrived in the breakfast room at the hotel, just as poor Mrs. Epsworth had given up the last hope; and Kate, *who* was anxious to know, since she was aware of the manœuvering upon the point, how the affair was settled, endeavoured to blunt the pangs of separation from her niece and of disappointment of foreign travel, by begging her, after Jane and the major were gone, to come to Burlington Gardens, where she would be most welcome as long as she chose to stay with them.

This invitation was not *quite* sincere.—What invitations are!—for although Miss Maxwell had a great and natural regard for Mrs. Epsworth, still she was not an entirely suitable companion for her: but the truth is, that Kate's mind was so overburdened with sorrow, care, hope, fear, apprehension, and a thousand other feelings, that she thought, independently of doing a good-natured thing, by asking Mrs. Epsworth to her father's house, she should bring into the circle something new,—some object to divert attention and attract the conversation from herself; for when Mousetrap was their inmate, it was necessary that he should have some mental food to exist upon: and although the gentle Kitty never designed to provide a butt for his shafts, in establishing Mrs. Epsworth in his neighbourhood, she felt no disinclination to use her as a shield, from which some of Godfrey's satirical darts might glance—at all events she gave the old gentlewoman the invitation.

This was the critical moment—it had certainly seemed, up to this period, more than doubtful whether she was to go with the young couple or not—all her *things* were packed up, and she was quite aware of the principle of leaving England light, in order to buy bargains abroad. Till this moment she had fancied although the major had received all the suggestions

bout her going with a *visage du bois*, that he was getting up little gallant agreeable surprise, and she should find herself ddenly included in the party; but when this invitation was ven, and the major said, "I'm sure, Ma'am, were I you, I ould rejoice in accepting Miss Maxwell's offer—a charming ouse at all times to go to, delightful, pleasant, sociable, nice, nd now, just after our departure, so much more agreeable ian returning to the country by yourself—Jove!"

The die was cast—her fate was sealed; a pull at the pin of he guillotine never more decidedly cut short mortal man, than id this little speech cut short the hopes of the good-natured, ommon-place Mrs. Epsworth. She thought it rude, but re-ollected in a moment that the major owed her no favour, that e had carried off her niece to marry her, and that his not in-easing his love after the ceremony, was merely a fair return or her former want of courtesy or consideration towards him; lthough it should never be forgotten, that it was more than uspected at the time, that this worthy old gentlewoman, com-elled as she was to make a show of opposition to the major's dvances upon Jane, in fact, very much sympathized with her aughter in her preference for that distinguished officer to her ousin, Mr. Edward Maxwell.

Be that as it may, Mrs. Epsworth gladly accepted the kind idding of Kate, who would have got through the affair with omfort to herself, had not the major, during the absence of his ife and aunt-in-law, chosen to let the poor girl into the whole ecret of his being acquainted with the history of her first love, d even more, that he had himself been personally intimate ith Charles Somerford.

The sound of that name, pronounced in a high tone and ith a sort of sacrilegious flippancy, as Kate felt it, overcame er

"Jane never told me that you knew him," said Kate, her yes filled with tears.

"She did'nt know till this morning that I did," said the ma-r: "it was in 1820—I was then in Calcutta. Hot furnace -melting—bungalows—burning—blazing—tremendous—he as stationed in Fort William—nice fellow—excellent—good -agreeable—"

"And," said Kate, scarcely knowing what she said,—"he as then in good health?"

"Perfect—perfect," cried the major; "perfect—firm as a rmer; but that's five years ago, and it takes less than that, ith some people, to upset a constitution; the climate is fine

up the country. I recollect he was a great favourite—pale—genteel—nice fellow—always melancholy—sad—sighing—heigh-ho!"

"Poor Charles!" said Kate, unconscious of the sharp and vivid description the major was giving.

"He made his way prodigiously," continued his eulogist, "wonderfully—at head-quarters—got upon the staff, and was in high favour with the commander of the forces."

"Ah, Major Overall," said Kate, "I have no doubt of his good qualities."

"The good qualities you speak of, I am sure he possessed," said the major; "but for none of those was he indebted to his sudden elevation,—it was his carving—his carving that did it—capital carver—excellent—dexterous—no accomplishment more important. See a man stabbing a roasted-duck in a hundred places, while the smoking bird flies about in the gravy to elude his fork!—horrid—low—vulgar—it was his skill that way, exhibited one day at the mess, that won the heart of the general, who happened to be dining with us;—curious—odd—singular."

All this seemed nonsense, and barbarous nonsense, to the astonished and wounded ears of Kate, who had expected, as the tribute of friendship, some high eulogy on the exalted virtues of her lost Charles, and whose feelings of anger, mortification, and sorrow, when she heard that the loved object of her hopes had cut his way to rank and preferment, not with his sword, but with a carving-knife, are quite beyond description. She decided in a moment that the major was speaking falsely,—but she was deceived, for such was actually the fact; although perhaps the major would have done as well to have left the foundation of his friend's fortune concealed: he had, however, yet not done his worst.

"However," continued he, for conscious that he would not have another opportunity of speaking to Kate upon the interesting subject for a long time, and really having in his heart the wish to soothe and console her, "however, for *my* part, I disbelieve the account of his death."

"Do you!" cried Kate; "why, Major Overall?"

"All that has been officially heard about it is, that he was dying when the last ships left the Cape of Good Hope, and that no expectations were entertained of his recovery: but," screamed the major, "while there's life there's hope."

"Hope," said Kate, "for whom?"

"Why, for young Somerford, and his friends," said Major Overall; "he *has* friends and relations I suppose?"

The silence which followed, induced the major, who carried on this conversation while marching and countermarching from one end of the drawing-room to the other, to turn towards Miss Maxwell, when he discovered that she had sunk backwards on the sofa senseless.

This alarmed the man of war, and assistance was speedily summoned; Jane, and her aunt, and the two maids, forthwith surrounded the poor girl as closely as possible in order to give her air, and the major rang the bell to order some hartshorn, which it was probable might arrive ten minutes after her recovery. But Kate was not a "fainting miss," the pangs she had to struggle with were of no common order, and the last ray of hope that Charles still lived, at the moment when she had almost become reconciled to the belief of his death, and at a moment too when his existence ought not to be, and could not be, of the least importance to her future happiness, burst upon her so vividly—so dreadfully—and opened to her view such a lengthened vista of wretchedness and misery, that harassed nature could no longer support herself.

Removed to the adjoining room she gradually recovered, and imparted to Jane the cause of her sudden and violent illness, which was wholly attributable to the carelessness and flippancy of the major, who had, in the course of ten minutes, become an object of such perfect abhorrence to Kate, that it was with difficulty she could induce herself to receive his adieux, and some consolatory apologies for his abruptness, when a squeeze of the hand from him, and a warm and fervent embrace from Jane, concluded the scene. Mrs. Epsworth, however, weeping bitterly at the departure of the bride and the bridegroom, posted herself at the window to see them start, and as the carriage drove off, thought proper—whether naturally or for effect, I cannot at present determine—to follow Miss Kate's example, and fall into a fainting fit.

In this, as there can be no doubt she will speedily recover from it, we will, with the reader's permission leave her. And having seen the last of the Overalls, learned the cause of Somerford's promotion, and thrown a little discredit upon the account of his death, we will now return to the fruit shop in Piccadilly, where we left Mr. Edward Maxwell playing bo-peep among the orange baskets.

Nearly an hour had elapsed since Edward had first taken up his position, and he had eaten a considerable quantity of grapes,

cracked a profusion of almonds, and even swallowed sundry oranges, in order to keep his temporary landlord in good humour, and supply him with suitable rent; and still the delicate girl hovered about the same spot, until at length he began to think that *he* himself must be the object of *her* search, and that, by a parity of reasoning with that upon which he had acted in visiting that part of the town, she had fancied his residence to be somewhere in the neighbourhood, and was now, in her own imagination, actually blockading him.

This idea once started, the fruiterer was payed, and Edward was proceeding to accost his beautiful friend, when, on turning round, he found she had a companion with her, who must have joined her exactly at the instant he had quitted his view of her, to put down his money on the counter of the shop. At all events, he could now follow, "and mark the road they took."

Accordingly he proceeded across the street, keeping a little in their rear, before he entered the park. She frequently turned her head, as if apprehensive of being discovered: he adroitly evaded her eye, and gained the entrance at the lodge; here she again turned; and instead of venturing to follow the couple along the broad walk down to St. James's Park, where, if she had looked round again she must have seen him, he stopped in the angle of the building, where he meant to remain until they had so far descended the hill, that he, by crossing the upper end of the basin, might keep them in a sort of parallel line with himself, along the pathway across the grass.

Here he was snug; but his fear of detection considerably increased, when he found that, instead of proceeding downwards, they were about to take another turn round the water—they hesitated at the corner near Lord Sefton's, and in the interval Edward shifted his quarters, and got out of the gate again into Piccadilly, and placed himself so as to command them where they could by no possibility see him, and yet where he would be close to them.

He watched their progress—the man, who appeared past the middle age, seemed in earnest conversation with her: he wore a blue cloak, which concealed his figure; but the actions of both were energetic; he lost sight of them until they turned; he then securely looked at them—there she was, blooming in all her wonted beauty and charms, with the same bright eyes and pearly teeth; but Edward Maxwell saw none of them. The man, her companion, fixed and engrossed his whole attention, and riveted his look; he doubted, hesitated—gazed again,—but as they came close to him, he was convinced—IT WAS HIS FATHER.

CHAPTER XI.

"With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart
Like monument of Grecian art;
In list'ning mood she seemed to stand,
The guardian Naiad of *the Strand*."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE surprise, the astonishment of Ned Maxwell at the sudden appearance of his respected and respectable parent, walking, with the greatest ease and familiarity, arm-in-arm with the mysterious object of his search, were such that he was nigh discovering himself, by rushing from his concealment across the very path they were pursuing. He, however, checked himself, and in a moment his mind was filled with ten thousand new feelings, new doubts, and new fears. He beheld his father, the intimate associate of this lovely young woman, who had evidently been waiting for him; he saw by her action and manner, not only that she was speaking on some interesting topic, but that she was labouring under a dread of discovery. His father, too, appeared to him to avert his face from the street as he passed the entrance, through which persons were going and coming more thickly; and, finally, he saw them take the unfrequented path across the turf, towards St. James's Park, by which, before he had ascertained who the "swain expected" was, he himself meant to watch the young lady's progress, and trace her to her home.

But when he saw his parent, the being to whom his duty and affection naturally belonged, the partner and associate of the lovely girl to whom he was devoted, he was paralyzed,—to follow, or to observe, was impossible. If his father's intentions were benevolent, his object good, what right had he to search or inquire into his actions?—on the contrary, if his father in his after-life, had, as many greater, wiser, and better men have done, become a captive to the charms and fascinations of youth and beauty, what right had he to interfere?—yet he felt sick at heart that he had seen them together, for now could he never separate them in his mind; he should meet his parent at din-

ner, and should hear the beautiful precepts of virtue and morality fall from his lips; he should hear him rail at the *vices* and follies of the world, but he should see in his mind's eye the bright vision by which he had been enchanted, and cease to respect the moral lessons of a preacher, whose conduct apparently so ill accorded with his precepts.

A young man more of the world than Edward would have laughed off the discovery, praised his father's good taste, envied him his good fortune, and (as has been the case) discussed with him the charms of the mistress he had been so lucky as to gain; but no, the event of the morning was a dagger in young Maxwell's heart. Whatever might happen, it separated him from the dear object of his romantic hopes and wishes—yet—she might be some young lady whose family his father might professionally attend, and whom of course *he need not* know—but no, that could not be—this girl, lovely and graceful as she was, was alone, unattended by a servant—waiting too, in what among the middling classes of society is acknowledged as a place of assignation, one *grade* higher that Harewood-place, and two grades lower than Kensington Gardens; besides, her acquaintance with the thief-taker—her subtle flight through the inn-yard, these were strong proofs of her inferiority of station, although neither her person, nor her manner, nor her conversation, bespoke it.

At all events, Edward saw the impossibility of following them—he could not securely do so in the open space, since the lovely fair one kept constantly looking round; but in truth it was not the physical difficulty that hindered him; it was principle that checked him—the idea of watching his parent, perhaps to establish his indiscretion, was repugnant to his feelings, and he stood gazing on the, to him, "interesting" couple, till the undulation of the ground concealed them from his view—when they disappeared all around him seemed darkness, he shuddered, trembled, and unconsciously retraced his way homewards.

Kate, meanwhile, had returned to Burlington Gardens with her new visiter, who, although she had consented to go there, rather than seem quite deserted, felt conscious that her presence, considering all things, could not be particularly agreeable either to Edward Maxwell or his father. Godfrey Moss had seen very little of the old lady, but he had seen enough to make him hate her, which feeling, superadded to his sovereign contempt for Major Overall, promised any thing but a pleasant

time for the dowager, as far as he was concerned. Indeed, taking all the circumstances into consideration, a more gloomy prospect never could have been prepared for half a dozen good sort of, good-natured, good-tempered, people.

Six o'clock at length arrived, and the party began to assemble. Apperton brought a city friend; Mrs. Epsworth came down with Kate; Moss grunted in a corner when he saw her approach, and the words "poor old cretur," escaped his lips unconsciously. Edward presented himself—one thought it was cold, another said it was not quite so cold as it had been the day before, Kate considered it fine weather for the time of year; Mrs. Epsworth thought the days seemed shorter in London than in the country; Mr. Apperton's city friend ventured to suggest that the smoke in London made a considerable difference in the light. Edward asked if there were any news, Apperton told him the price of three per cent. consols, and Godfrey Moss entreated Kittums to order dinner, and not wait for her father—Moss being of opinion that, where his appetite was concerned, the master of the house was a very unimportant personage.

At length, however, Maxwell himself appeared, apologizing for his lateness, as he had been unexpectedly detained.

It is scarcely possible to explain the state of Edward's feelings, when he saw his father as usual, placid, mild, almost venerable in his appearance, making his excuses for professional delays—the Green Park and the beauty were in an instant before the young man's eyes, and thence taking a retrospect of all the delays for which his respected parent had in like manner been in the habit of apologizing for the last six or seven years, he came to a decision somewhat more creditable to Mr. Maxwell's gallantry than to his respectability; but this decision could not fail to be painful in an eminent degree.

At dinner he watched every word and action of the old gentleman's—when he saw his hand extended to raise his glass to his lips, the recollection that the hand of the beautiful unknown had been pressed by it but a few hours before, flashed into his mind, and when he heard his sire lamenting the depravity of some libertine, who added to his other crimes the dangerous one of duplicity, by which, under the guise of friendship and even morality, he rendered the destruction of his victims more secure, he nearly laughed aloud; and yet he wondered at the still placid deportment of his parent, and the ease with which he maintained a precisely similar conduct to that which he had ever adopted in the bosom of his family; a

wonder, which, however, was gradually modified, as his son began to believe that the gayety in which he had that day accidentally detected him was neither new nor extraordinary.

"I hope, Mr. Moss," said Mrs. Epsworth, wishing at the earliest opportunity to conciliate, if possible, that terrible man, "I hope you will come some day and see me at Dullham."

"Whenever I have committed any crime which the law creturs shall think fit to punish severely, Ma'am, I will," said Moss. "No, no, none o' your country houses for me."

"I thought, Moss," said Maxwell, "you were a great admirer of the social parties at Lord Belford's and the Christmas festivities at—"

"Pshaw, Mack!" interrupted Moss,—"so I am. I like a handful of London put down in a house full of luxury and comfort, with just as much rurality as you please, and no more; and that in a space sufficient to let every man do as he likes; or give me a tree on a grass plot with a table under it, where one may smoke a cigar, and drink the ginnums and water, without offending any of your fine folks; either one thing or the other, but not such a place as that old body's."

Apperton's city friend stared.

"Why, Mr. Moss," said Mrs. Epsworth, twisting herself into a thousand contortions of face and body to seem good-natured,—"I'm sure you can't judge of Dullham house, for you have never been there."

"No, Ma'am, but I know them as has," said Moss.

Apperton's friend, whispered "vulgar" to Apperton.

"And," continued he, "I'm told yours is what is called a regular family: breakfast at nine, and wait till every body's down before you begin; dine at five, to which I have no objection; and after tea, talk conversation, or play shilling whist till ten, and then go to bed again."

"A very rational style of living too," said Kate.

"What, without a cigar, and a drop of sommat nice and warm?" said Moss. "No, no,—no go—however, I *doos* 'em even in such places as them, Ma'am: I make myself uncommonly agreeable to the housemaids, and so secure my little groggums in my bed-room, while I sit and smoke my cigar out of the window, if it is hot weather, or up him chimley if it is cold."

"But what does your servant think of your proceedings?" said Maxwell.

"Servant!" said Moss, "as if I ever travelled with a servant; no, Ma'am," continued he, addressing Mrs. Epsworth,

"you'll never be pestered with a servant if *I* come to see you —one razor and a brush wrapped up in a bit of an old newspaper, does my toilet; I'm not over nice."

"Is he mad?" whispered Apperton's friend.

"No—only oddish," replied the stockbroker.

"And then, Ma'am, don't send one of the maids into my room in the morning by day-break to light my fire," said Godfrey, "rushing in like a fiend, stumping and thumping every thing about, as all them serving creturs do, on purpose to show *their* independence."

"You shall do exactly as you like, Mr. Moss," said Mrs. Epsworth, and have every thing your own way."

"Well, we'll see, Ma'am," said Moss. "I can't promise; to be sure, now the young lady with her 'Ah, perdona,' or whatever you call the thing she used to try to sing, poor body, and that squeaking little cretur she has married are gone, it may be pleasant for a day or two."

"Come, Moss,—come, pass the bottle," said Maxwell, who evidently saw that an attempt to qualify his rudeness to poor Mrs. Epsworth would only be adding fuel to the flame, and who hoped, by circulating the wine, to get the conversation into another current.

"Well!" said Apperton's friend to himself, shrugging up his shoulders.

"I see," whispered the stockbroker to his friend, "you are not quite familiar with the transactions of this house: we are as lively here, as in Change-alley."

"But with always a *bear* account, I should think," said his friend.

"Not so," said Apperton. "Moss is a shade or two better or worse, according to the fluctuation, but sometimes he is quite at a premium."

"I'll bet a hat," said his friend, "that that man never *can* be pleasant."

"Done," said Apperton.

Edward, who had listened to this give-and-take dialogue, almost unconsciously, for his eyes were constantly fixed on his father, was both edified and amused by its termination; for, although so nearly allied, as he would shortly be, with a city-man, he had never before heard of a bet of the nature now proposed, and did not know that hats are the circulating medium in the sporting world, east of Temple-bar.

"What a lovely day we have had," said Maxwell, who had

arrived too late to join the meteorological debate *which* occurred before dinner.

"Lovely," said Kate; "Mrs. Epsworth and I walked *for* nearly two hours in the park."

"Which park?" said Maxwell, with unusual quickness.

Edward watched his countenance during the answer.

"Hyde Park," replied Kate, "and thence through the Green Park, to the gate opposite Clarges-street."

Not a muscle of his countenance was moved.

"What time was that?" said Maxwell.

"About three, I should think," said Mrs. Epsworth.

"*I* was in the Green Park, about three," said the elder Maxwell.

Edward would have given the world to speak, to ask one question, but consciousness, and the dread of his father's knowing that he had discovered his affair, kept him silent.

"What, *you* taking pleasure, papa?" said Kate.

"I was, I assure you," said her father, "and walked on, till I found myself—having passed through the park—on the other side of Westminster Bridge."

"Did the carriage follow you?" said Kate.

"No, my love," said Maxwell; "Robert, my coachman, was not very well this morning, and so I thought I would give him a little rest, and I did what I had to do on foot."

"But what took you over Westminster Bridge, Sir?" *said* Apperton.

Edward loved him for asking the question which he himself would have given the world to put.

"I had a call to make, Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, in a good-humoured tone, but with a manner implying—'What is *that* to you?'

Edward was confounded. The easy, unmoved, unshaken readiness with which the old gentleman repelled every advance, and baffled every attack, astonished him; but it more and more distressed him, for he became persuaded that his respected parent was habituated to this sort of deception, and that nine times out of ten when he put on the same sort of decisive smile, and stopped further inquiry by implying that the call he had to make was professional, he had in fact been devoting himself to some fair creature like her, who had been the partner of his walk that very morning.

All this struck deeply into Edward's heart. The debasement of his father in his estimation, by such a display of duplicity, was painful enough of itself, but when he recollected

that, in order to establish his father's impropriety and hypocrisy, his lovely companion must be degraded too, the wound was doubly severe: for a second time had he been wakened from his dream of love and happiness; the first discovery, however, that she was not the writer of the letter from the Golen-cross, restored him to peace and comfort; but the second left no hope, for if there were no necessity for concealment, or if the young lady were a presentable person, or one who *could* be named in decent society, of course his father *would have* had no objection to mention that he had a companion *in his* morning's ramble, or that he had met a young lady, or indeed any part of the transaction; but, on the contrary, having ascertained that his daughter and her friend did not see him, he admits the walk, but carefully conceals every other part of the adventure; crosses Westminster Bridge before he knows where he is, and yet has a call to make when he gets there.

And then the affected humanity and good feeling towards the coachman, poor Robert, of whose illness not a word had been heard until this particular day, when the old gentleman thought rest good for the servant, and exercise good for himself; and then Edward began to recollect the frequent absence of his father on professional business, during whole nights, and especially when he returned with boots covered with country mud, and would give no account of himself, although he did *not* get home until long after breakfast; in short, Ned was sadly plagued, and when the ladies retired it was with difficulty he could maintain a conversation, to which his father, unconscious of his son's feelings, led with his usual gayety, animation, and spirit, and wondered at the depression of the young gentleman, so evident to all the party.

"Have you been vision-hunting to-day, Ned?" said Maxwell.

This was rather too much—the father might have asked such a question, but from a rival, and that as far as vision-*hunting* went, a successful one, it was too galling—he almost *believed* that his respectable parent knew that his morning companion was the vision itself.

"No," said Apperton, for Edward literally could not reply, "I rather think she has not deigned to appear of late—has she, Ned?"

"My dear fellow," said Edward, "spare me—there *are* points upon which jokes may be made, but I really do not think I deserve always to be selected as the subject of quizzing upon that particular one. I am young, and have at all events that privilege, at least, of being foolish."

"No foolery in being in love, Ned," said Moss; "we all have our time for it—every dog has his day, they say, and you and I, Mack, have had ours, haven't we?"

"Yes," thought Edward, "that you *have*, and have still."

"I wish you could once nail her," said Godfrey; "I should like to know who she is."

"Ah, there's no great chance of Ned's ever doing that," said Maxwell the elder; "the account he gives of the young lady convinces me that he will never gain much by his acquaintance with *her*."

Edward was absolutely angry—he longed to proclaim his knowledge, and triumph over the foe—but that foe was his father, and he sat and writhed under the agony of thwarted affection, and injured pride, heightened by the irritating application of Moss's irony, and Apperton's matter-of-fact. *All this*, however, he bore for half an hour, when at length, and after a good deal of preparatory fidgeting, he made his escape to the ladies.

The peculiar circumstances of his peculiarly romantic affair, were then detailed for the enlightenment of Apperton's city friend, who volunteered another bet of a hat that the flickering fair one was an impostor; during the whole of which discussion, the elder Maxwell argued, and reasoned, and in short said so much about it that it was clear he could know nothing, and that whatever might have been the circumstances which had so curiously thrown the young lady herself into his society, and apparently under his protection in the morning, he was utterly and entirely ignorant of her being the object of his romantic son's arduous search, and ardent admiration.

Edward, however, appeared no more that night; in any other imaginable case, Kate, his kind, his excellent sister Kate, would have been his confidant and counsellor, but on this matter she could not be spoken to—never was young gentleman more worried or perplexed; for although, if his father spoke sincerely as to the direction in which he walked from the Green Park, he had obtained something like a clue (rather slender to be sure,) to the direction of the young lady's residence, still the very fact of her acquaintance with the old gentleman put an end at once to his wish of discovering where she lived, or who she was—and yet—perhaps if he could see, and speak to her again, and lead her to the subject, and mention his father's name to her, he might judge from the effect produced upon her of the nature of their acquaintance; for now, he very wisely resolved, if he met her the next day, not

to tell her who *he* himself was; and very naturally congratulated himself upon the accidental interruption which cut him short, in his last walk with her, just at the very moment he was on the point of disclosing all the particulars of his family residence, &c.

Edward's favourite scheme at the moment was to leave London in the morning; he literally dreaded to encounter his father—it was perhaps a strange reluctance, but I believe a natural one—he could not hide his feelings—he could not speak freely—*he* could not affect respectfulness—what could he *do?* He was aware that it would be foolish to quit town for so short a time as he could be absent; since three days only intervened between that morning and his sister's wedding day; a circumstance which of itself might account for the visible depression of that young lady's spirits, who seemed to prepare for her approach to the altar, as an Indian's widow would make ready for a suttee.—The absence of any thing like a flame, however, renders the simile somewhat imperfect.

It is the commonest possible observation, how extremely unpleasant it is to be in the society of two fond lovers—it is irksome in the extreme, for the poor creatures are unconscious of the exhibition they are making, and strive not to be particular, which renders the affair, if possible, even worse. To witness*ing* this, by way of amusement, watching two lumps of sugar *melting* in the bottom of a tea-cup is infinitely superior, especially when affairs are drawing towards a crisis,—now at Maxwell's there was nothing of the sort to embarrass anybody; the conversation and manner of Apperton and Kate were so calm, and so rational, that for all the visiters could know of the matter, they might have been married half a dozen years before.

Apperton's jolly white and red face bore on it no mark of care, or love, or wo; he stood with his back to the fire joking with his city friend, every now and then clapping his hard hands together with a loud report, expressive, as it should *seem*, of happiness and independence; Kate sat working and talking to Mrs. Epsworth; while Moss in the corner was telling some uncommon good joke, evidently against the stranger of the day—the hat-better from Change Alley. Whist, however, was soon the order of the night; and when Apperton, Maxwell, and the stranger had cut for the lady, Mrs. Epsworth joined them, and commenced a rubber of longs—shorts being yet unknown at Dullham house.

Moss then wriggled and wheeled himself on his chair towards the piano-forte, to which he ordered his Kittums, and

there he fixed her, to play for his amusement; a huge tumbler of "sommat nice and warm," which he had (with a bit *o'nut*-meg a top on him) that evening instead of tea, because *he* warn't well, was set upon one of the candlestick places of the instrument, from which ever and anon he sipped while he furnished a sort of prosaic running accompaniment to Miss Katherine's harmony, in which he poured forth the declaration of his bitter hatred of Mrs. Epsworth and all her family, and his sovereign contempt for six-and-eightpenny Jack, as he christened the civic friend of Miss Maxwell's betrothed.

This evening, however, withall its old associations, *its little* fooleries and tricks, was destined to be the last of *its* race. The two following days were to be devoted to the preparations for the marriage, and the trip to Brighton. Miss O'Connochie was to be one of the bride's-maids, and she and Miss Fletcher, her fair colleague, were constantly in council with Kate and Mrs. Epsworth, upon points of dress and etiquette; for among other absurdities observable in society, high, low, or middling, is this most pre-eminent one:—a girl is never on the point of marriage, but she forthwith proceeds to order dresses, and petticoats, and bodies, and slips, and cloaks, and gowns, and pelisses, and all other such articles, as if, during the period of her existence, prior to her entering the holy state of matrimony, she had never worn any clothes at all. To be married is, it is true, to join one's fate with another's: but serious and *heavy* as are the religious and moral obligations which the change may entail upon us, as far as all the physical part of the affair is concerned, surely a lady does not want more gowns and petticoats after she is married, than she required before. By the system of bride-fitting, so universally adopted, people not reasoning upon this point would be inclined to think she did. Kate, however, was a rational clear sighted person; her object and desire were to avoid all show and bustle; and since by a sort of tacit agreement, it had been settled that she *was* to be Mrs. Apperton, why, the quieter and simpler the proceeding which made her so, the better.

Miss O'Connochie was violent for cake and gloves, and Miss Fletcher was equally argumentative in the cause of favours, but Kate decided for neither, a decision highly approved of by the bridegroom, who admired her economy, and saw no good in wasting money in millinery and pastry.

In the midst of these preparations, Edward, the once gay and animated, appeared wretched and melancholy; Kate saw *the* depression of his spirits, and laid it to the account of *his*

strange attachment, without, of course, guessing at the real nature of his sorrow and abstraction; it was chiefly his father whom he wished to avoid; the restraint which the sight he had seen imposed upon him in the old gentleman's presence, his grief at knowing what he did, and his anxiety to know more, the mixture of hope and apprehension, and the apparent impossibility of ever touching on the subject again, the respect due to a parent, which alike prevented his pursuing the object of his affections, and endeavouring to seek farther concerning *her*;—altogether he was so completely beaten by circumstances *that* he evaded dining at home the two days previous to the "nuptial celebration," in order, not only to conceal his feelings, but to avoid the questions to which a change in his manner and spirits, of which he himself was perfectly conscious, would naturally expose him.

But fate had other trials in store for him; for when he least expected it, he again beheld his fair tormentor—this time, however, she was walking rapidly—as usual, unattended—and was hurrying through the crowd and bustle of Charing-cross, where, according to Doctor Johnson, runs "the full tide of human existence."

"This time," thought Edward, "she shall not escape me;" for, although it seemed decreed that their acquaintance was never to become more intimate than it was at the moment, still he would ascertain, if possible, her residence and her name, in order to establish his father's morality, and restore him to his proper place in the respect and admiration of an affectionate son, from which the affair of the Green Park had so suddenly and so disagreeably hurried him. Accordingly, the young gentleman, at such a distance as ensured his safety from detection, followed the fair one until she crossed to the Strand; along the crowded pavement did the sylph-like creature glide under the *surveillance* of her anxious follower, until she reached the coach-stand near Wellington-street; here she stopped, and having secured a coach, stepped into it; the direction whither to drive was given in a whisper to the waterman, and the vehicle drove off.

In an instant Edward was at the same waterman's side; a half-crown, slipped into his dirty hand, at the moment the question, "what that direction was," was asked, elicited a willing and immediate answer, "Tower Hill, sir."

In half a minute was the ardent swain enveloped in a fast and nasty hack cabriolet, and very shortly overtook the coach which *contained his* lovely idol—once in its wake, anxiously

did he check the aspiring courage of his driver, which would have led him to dash past the heavy "crawler," but Edward bid his young ambition sleep, and charged him to keep where he was, in the rear of the carriage before them—so he did; and at the corner of that elevated space, oft moistened by the blood of traitors, did he, having extricated himself from the watch-box on wheels, at the end of Thames-street, see the lovely fair one again tread the earth—she performed the unromantic task of paying the coachman, like any other commonplace every-day woman, and then proceeded to the stairs leading to the river.

It was one of the coldest days of early spring, it was getting latish in the afternoon, and this beautiful young creature was going to embark on the water, a measure which, independently of its being, as Edward thought, extremely perilous to her health and safety, was particularly disagreeable to him, as he did not exactly see how he could follow her down the stream without being discovered.

The expedition, at all events, demanded caution; and accordingly having seen her off, in a boat rowed by a sculler, Edward, having given her time enough to be out of eye-shot of *him*, stepped into another wherry with a pair of oars, and directed the waterman to pull across the river, so that *he* could command her little bark, while she, unconscious of being watched, would, even if among the numerous vessels passing and re-passing she saw another boat gliding among the tiers of shipping at anchor, never imagine that anybody on board of it was intently regarding her progress, and, of course, would take no steps to elude the vigilance of his search.

Away went the wherries, at their relative distances for a considerable time, until Edward felt extremely cold, and the evening began to draw in; at length, however, the crisis of his fate approached; the boat bearing the lady neared a good sized merchant ship, distinguished among her neighbours for cleanness of appearance, the tautness of her masts, and the squareness of her yards; the waterman who rowed the lady gave two or three sharp concluding pulls, took in his sculls, and as the wherry had just way enough to bring her under the bow of the ship, caught the rope which was handed to him from the forecastle, and hauled up alongside in a most seaman-like manner.

In another minute "the chair" (half a cask wrapped up in a dirty red ensign,) was seen descending into the boat, and *before a third* had elapsed the fair vision was "whipped up

handsomely," and received at the gangway by the master of the ship, who immediately released her from her bunting bondage, with all the gallantry of a thoroughbred true blue skipper.

"What ship is that?" said Edward to the waterman, as he saw, with the most unqualified surprise, the flight of his beloved.

"Can't say, sir," said the waterman—"she looks like a Yankee, I think."

"Ay, ay," said his partner, "so she be—'Merricay built. *She's the* ship vot come up to them moorings in January last; *don't* you recollect that Mounsheer chap as we brought up from her with the trunks, what was stopped at the Custom-house about the *sea*-gars,"

"Ah, so she is," replied the other; "I think they call her the 'Villelmeney.' She belongs here to Lunnun river;" a name invariably given by jolly tars all over the world to the pride of our country, "the silver Thames."

Having thus housed, or rather shipped the lady, Edward was rather puzzled what next to do, he ordered his rowers to lay to, for a minute or too, but when he saw the boat which had borne his idol to the Villelmeney (which the reader may perhaps anticipate was the Wilhelmina), returning up the river, having left her on board, his confusion became worse confounded,—who was she—what could she be—did she live in a ship—was she the wife or daughter of the master—was she going away in the ship?—how could his father have become acquainted with her?

In the midst of this perplexity the returning waterman neared them, and Edward gave the men directions to come up with him and ask whether the lady was going to stop on board.

They did ask, and the answer received was "No; she was a going ashore with the captain in *his* boat, vich was the reason he vant vanted no more."

It was now getting rather duskish, and had already gotten very cold, and the young Londoner was extremely chilly, and felt extremely awkward as to the instructions he should give his watermen; at length, the fog and the darkness coming on, and there being no appearance of the young lady, he resolved upon landing at the stairs nearest the ship, to which, of course, the captain would bring her; seeing that he thought waiting about on land preferable to being afloat at that time of the day, and that season of the year; and, accordingly, consulting his rowers as to the most usual landing-place for persons coming

from ships in the position of the Wilhelmina he was pulled to the *chausséc*, and after paying the waterman, took up his position on a little sort of terrace at the head of the stairs, where he commanded a full view of the vessel, which was now more distinguishable by a light in her cabin-window, and a fire in her caboose, than by any other mark or feature.

Here did the patient sufferer walk up and down until eight o'clock; hungry he was not, for the anxiety of his heart destroyed or rather superseded appetite, but very uncomfortable he *was*, his feet were cold and wet, a kind of chilling mist hanging on his whiskers, and a sort of incipient tooth-ache assailing the right side of his face; when one of the habitual idlers of a landing-place, who had been watching his patient progress up and down for some time, ventured, half from civility, and half from curiosity, to ask him if he was waiting for anybody.

"Why," said Edward, "yes—that is to say—no—I think I expect a boat from the Wilhelmina, that handsome looking ship there—the captain's boat—I—that is—eh?"

"No, sir," said the man, "I don't think ther'll be any boat from her, to-night; besides, the cappun never comes ashore this here side, he lives somewhere about Bermonsey, and always lands the other side the water. I think his boat pulled ashore more than an hour ago, didn't it, Bill?"

"Ah, a precious sight more than that," said his companion, who was contentedly smoking a pipe, which he removed from his mouth just to let that information and a curling volume of smoke escape at the same moment. This was by no means an agreeable announcement to Ned Maxwell, who, however, was not sorry to hear the fact, as it rendered his farther stay at that time needless; and, truth to be told, the temperature of the night was just then getting considerably below love-heat; so he reconciled himself to the disappointment, by the reflection that his staying out in the cold any longer was useless, and accordingly resolved to make the best of his way towards the civilized world, and pay his new friend, the Wilhelmina, a visit the next day.

"Pray," said Edward to his first informant, "do you happen to know whether the captain of the ship is married?"

"Yes he be, sir," said the man; "I knows that, from going off with different people from the stairs; he has got a wife, and she's a good deal on board with him."

"Do you recollect," said Edward, sharpening the fellow's

memory with a shilling—"do you happen to recollect what sort of person his wife is?"

"Uncommon nice little woman as ever trod shoe-leather," said the man. "I tell you who she's like, Bill," continued he, addressing his messmate. "She's just sich another as Poll Button, at Redriff; just her make and shape for the life of it —she's uncommon pretty."

"And how does she generally dress?" said Maxwell, "smart, or ——"

"Smart, indeed, I believe you," said the waterman; "only just now they are in mourning; so you see on account o' that, sir, she can't make herself over fine."

In mourning—and beautiful—although compared to Poll Button,—it must be the captain's wife; but then his father, how should he know any thing of a Bermondsey skipper's better-half.

"And pray," said Edward, "what is the name of the captain?"

"Randolph, I think they call him," said the man; "I takes it he's a bit of a Yankee born himself, but I'm sure I can't rightly say, because as how I don't know, not for certain."

"Randolph," said Edward, who, skeptical as he was as to his father's knowledge of such people, had gained much information, and not wishing to be ungrateful bestowed his bounty upon his informant's friend Bill, telling him to go and drink the king's health.

"That I will, your honour," said Bill; "I sarved him and his father two-and-forty years, and I only wish I had two-and-forty years more wear and tear in me, and that George the Fourth might live to wear me out."

"He's a right good 'un, is Bill," said the other sailor, in a half whisper to Edward, growing familiar by dint of encouragement.

"Well, good night, my fine fellows," said Edward, "you know you need not say that I have asked you any of these questions."

"Mum's the word," said Bill, shaking out the ashes of his pipe on the head of a post at the top of the stairs. "I can guess what you are up to,—if I can't, i'm——but no matter for that,—close as wax—a fish swims deep, and says nothing to nobody. She *is* a pretty woman, your honour, and that's the truth on't."

"And uncommon like Poll Button, I will persist," said the other.

"But now," said Edward, "I am going to the west end of the town, which is my way?"

"Are you going as far as the Tower, sir?" said Bill, who seemed to think that fortress the *ultima Thulé* of elegance and fashion.

"Oh, very far beyond it, indeed," said Edward.

"Well, but howsomever," observed the other, "if so be the gemman is a going farther to the vestard, the Tower will be a likelyish pint to take a fresh departure from. Now, sir, come along wi' me, I'll put you in the right road, and if you want a cast off to Villelmeny any time o' day, or night either, Bill and I's the boys who'll give it to you, your honour—ah—all free gratis, for nothing."

"Good-night, your honour," said Bill; "he'll show you the right way, sir; he's an uncommon good land pilot, whatever he may be on the river."

"Now, sir," said the waterman, "this here's Broad-street, that ere's Cock-hill, just you keep your face up that way, and follow your nose, and you are sure to fetch the Tower right a-head o' you."

"Thank you, my good fellow," said Edward, and overwhelmed as he was with confusion at the history he had heard of Mrs. Randolph, he proceeded with all due speed on his homeward voyage. Accordingly, he shaped his passage through Cock-hill and Shadwell, to Ratcliffe-highway, and having walked until he was nearly exhausted, inquired his distance from the Royal Exchange, which being a standard created in his mind indicative of the city, and of some place where he could, perhaps, get something like dinner, struck him first, and received for answer that the person whom he asked didn't exactly know how far he was from the Royal Exchange, but that he was about a mile from the Tower.

To the eastward of the Tower at nearly nine o'clock, in a cold foggy evening too, no vestige of a hackney coach, and nothing to reflect upon but the discomfiture of his scheme, and the mysterious disappearance of his lovely vision, and all this too upon an empty stomach, which, although appetite still did not afflict him, affected him in the way of exhaustion, under the fatigue of mind and body which for the last four or five hours he had undergone; at length the well known turrets of the white tower were in sight, the broad ditch, the trees, the Trinity House in the distance, all spoke the vicinity of a coach-stand, and accordingly wearied out with watching and wailing, the distracted Ned was buttoned up in a convenient hack,

and forthwith ordered the coachman to drive to a tavern at the west end of the town, where he could re-invigorate himself without encountering the inmates of his father's house, among whom, as must be evident, his father himself was to him decidedly the most formidable under all the circumstances.

In the mean time his absence from home had created various surmises and many observations; but Kate felt no uneasiness at his continued absence, because, as she told her father, she attributed it to the presence of Mrs. Epsworth, which, although perhaps in itself not enough to keep him from the family circle, was rendered by Moss and his jokes extremely embarrassing, and even unpleasant to him. To speak to Moss on the subject would have been to ensure double the number of jests and allusions, so that altogether, Maxwell himself, who loved quiet and tranquillity, and who had not of course the remotest idea of the real cause of his son's defection, bore his absence patiently.

Edward, unlike himself, did not return home until the family were gone to rest. One day only now intervened between the marriage of his sister, upon which occasion his attendance would be of course essential; and, therefore, he resolved to devote the morrow to the discovery of the besetting mystery of his life, to which he was anxiously led by the desire of being able, if possible, to meet his father with a mind unburthened on the day of the wedding.

He appeared at breakfast, but his father was not of the party,—he had gone out before the breakfast-hour, and bid the servants tell Miss Maxwell not to wait for his return.

"Come then," said Godfrey Moss, "no need of waiting to-day—no fear of his being killed *this* morning, as I never shall forget the day you kept me without breakfast for two or three hours, while he was out upon that mysterious visit of his, the *night* after the hullaballoo up-stairs."

"Mr. Moss!" said Kate, looking at him with an expression with which she meant to awe him into silence.

"Oh, some indiscreet dutchess, I suppose," said Moss; "I don't want to pry into the secrets of the prison-house."

"Kate," said Edward, who had grown from circumstances somewhat suspicious of his father's eccentricities, "what was that story?"

"Edward," said Kate, "I am surprised at your asking me. I have sworn, sworn by the most sacred tie of my life, my duty to my father, *never* to reveal what I saw that night, nor ever

to allude to any of the circumstances connected with it. I wonder *you* should wish me to violate such an engagement."

"Why," said Moss, "by this time to-morrow, Kittums, *your* conscience won't be in your own keeping,—you'll have a lord and master, and then you will have no credit for keeping a secret, now—"

"Let me entreat you both—be quiet," said Kate. "What I saw that night, even though at this moment I really do not know the meaning of it, will never be effaced from my memory."

"It wan't the ghost of your sweetheart chap in India, was *it*, Kittums?" said Moss, as he filled his mouth with a piece of toast, so well buttered as to bedew its corners.

The chord was touched that vibrated through Kate's whole heart and soul. Moss meant no harm, the thought struck him, and as he had no conception of such a feeling as fills the bosom of a woman who has once, and fondly, loved, he thought what he said was rather *piquante* than otherwise, and not particularly mischievous, at the moment, and under the circumstances; it was too much for Kate, she burst into tears and ran out of the breakfast-room.

"Upon my word, Moss," said Edward, "you are *too* bad; —why, what could induce you to say such a thing to poor Kate?"

"I didn't know," said Moss: "I'm sure if she bursts *out* crying about that cretur in India, to-day, she ought *not* to marry Jack Three-per-cents to-morrow."

"But you know that poor Somerford is actually dead," said Edward, "and that she has only heard of his death within three or four days."

"Better be dead than alive then," said Moss, "if she's to be Mrs. Apperton; because now she knows that this poor cretur is in his grave or burnt, or whatever they do to get rid of 'em in them outlandish parts, it's no manner o' use for her to be worriting, and poking about. A dead man cannot marry a live woman, and so all's for the best; he's gone, well, then, she may just as well marry Apperton as not."

"You don't enter into the characters of women," said Ned; "there is a constancy, a devotedness about them which is utterly unknown to man."

"Witness your friend Miss Jane Epsworth," said Moss: "there's constancy for you. Give us some more toast."

"I admit that I deserved to lose *her*," said Edward; "I neglected her—that's no case in point."

"Ah, no great loss neither," replied Godfrey. "I'm sure with such a cretur of an aunt she never could have come to good; why that old body won't come down to breakfast for the next hour. She's as particular about her face and her figure as a girl of fifteen; and when she has done with her frizzles, and fronts, and furbelows, and all the rest of it, her properest place would be up in one of her own cherry-trees, to keep away the birdums."

"I wonder if Kate will come back?" said Edward.

"I hope so, poor dear child," said Moss; "for how am I to get my second cup of tea, if she don't?"

"That," said Edward, "was a curious event in our family,—that disturbance in this house, and my father's absence the whole night."

"Oh," said Moss, "I know, it's some fine mystery about one o' your fashionable creturs—put off matrimony too long—eh, I know—eh."

"But what could Kate have seen there," said Edward, "at the very recollection of which, she shudders even yet?"

"That may be all got up between them," said Moss.

"I do not give my sister credit for sufficient duplicity to get up a story," said Edward.

"I say, Ned," said Moss, "have you seen your visionary lady lately?"

"Not very lately," said Edward; "but why—"

"Why, because," said Moss, "I think your father is dreadfully annoyed, and cut up about it,—he thinks you will make some bad match—throw yourself away, or catch a Tartar, or something unpleasant."

"Does he express himself very strongly on the point?" said Edward.

"No," said Moss; "but in talking over your frequent absence from home, and your bad spirits when you are here, he mentions it—but—what am I to do for my tea?—do, Ned, go and see if Kittums is coming back."

Edward accordingly retreated, having finished his breakfast, and being too glad to get away from his old friend Godfrey, from whom he could gather no very correct information as to his father's feelings, and being especially anxious so to improve his acquaintance (not yet made) with Captain Randolph, of the Wilhelmina, that he might obtain some certain information with respect to the young lady herself, who must certainly be a friend, relation, or acquaintance of the worthy personage. He accordingly betook himself to the streets, *via* the surgery, and out of

the pupils'-door, leaving Fate to take care of Mr. Godfrey Moss, who, in the sequel, was doomed to a long *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Epsworth, whom he hated, and who, among her numerous other failings in his eyes, never put sugar or cream enough into his tea.

It was past eleven o'clock when Edward found himself, with his face towards the east, starting on his Quixotic expedition; during his walk he arranged the course of his proceedings. He would go on board the Wilhelmina, see Captain Randolph, and state his anxiety to know who the lady was whom he had traced to his vessel the day before; if she turned out, as he anticipated, to be Mrs. Randolph, he was armed with divers and sundry excuses and apologies, by the aid of which he might "back out;" and if she turned out to be anybody else, he might either obtain an interview with her, or, at all events, satisfy himself of her rank and connexions; and, above all, with the circumstances which connected her with that vessel. In short, Edward had settled the whole affair—had in his own mind conciliated the skipper, and even had been presented in form to the fair one, from whose lips he perhaps might learn the nature of her at present perplexing acquaintance with his father.

To accelerate his progress, he had recourse to the hackney-coach system; and long before one reached the Tower-stairs, where he proposed to embark, not only because there was a pleasurable association in doing what the *fay* had done the day before, but because it would save him an overland journey to the ship, and, moreover, keep him from an entanglement with Bill and his co-mate, who, notwithstanding their good intentions, might, from being so much in his secret, do him some harm by their observations and remarks while alongside.

As it happened he found the same watermen plying who took him down the day before, who were too ready to have so liberal a customer; and here it may not be quite out of place to observe, that the smallness of the fares legally allowed to watermen, affords one of the principal reasons why men pay such persons much more than they really deserve. The pittance awarded by the Watermen's Company, and sanctioned by the commissioners, is so trifling, that it would be barbarous to exact the labour required from the waterman at the price charged; the consequence is, that they are infinitely overpaid by those who would confine themselves to the simple discharge of the fare, if it were at all proportionate to the work and to the losses the boatmen endure during a long and hard winter. Edward,

being bound by no fixed rule, had remunerated his two gondoliers so liberally that they flew to usher him to their wherry, in which no sooner was he seated, and the word Wilhelmina uttered, than she cut the parting water, and shot onward to the desired goal.

The day was bright, and milder than the preceding one; the sun shone, and the river was covered with vessels. Proud sight for our favoured, happy city—here lay the Swede, the Russian, and the Hollander; there swam upon our waters the Gaul, the Portuguese, the Spaniard, and the Dane. Here floated the striped flag of the Trans-Atlantic Republic, and there, in breeze, was wafted the Prussian eagle, or the Danish cross; all bearing to our happy mart the luxuries of every quarter of the globe.

How well does the enlightened and talented Doctor Arnott, in his interesting "Elements of Physics," bring to our view the activity of the whole living population, for the enjoyment and gratification of their fellow-creatures. "In England," says he, "a man of small fortune may cast his looks around, and say, with truth and exultation, I am lodged in a house that affords me conveniences and comforts which some centuries ago even a king could not command. Ships are crossing the seas in every direction to bring me what is useful to me from all parts of the earth. In China, men are gathering the tea-leaf for me; in America they are planting cotton for me; in the West India Islands, they are preparing my sugar and my coffee; in Italy they are feeding silk-worms for me; in Saxony, they are shearing the sheep, to make me clothing; at home, powerful steam-engines are spinning and weaving for me, and making cutlery for me, and pumping the mines, that minerals useful to me may be procured. Although my patrimony was small, I have post coaches running all day and night to carry my correspondence; I have roads, and canals, and bridges, to bear the coal for my winter fire—nay, I have protecting fleets and armies around my happy country, to secure my enjoyments and repose. Then I have editors and printers, who daily send me an account of what is going on in the world among all these people who serve me; and in a corner of my house I have books, the miracle of my possessions more wonderful than the wishing-cap of the Arabian Tales; for they transport me instantly not only to all places but to all times. By my books I can conjure up before me to vivid existence all the great and good men of antiquity, and for my own individual satisfaction, I can make them act over again

the most renowned of their exploits ; the orators declai me ; the historians relate ; the poets sing ; from the Ec to the Pole, or from the beginning of time until now, b books I can be where I please. This picture is not charged, and might be much extended ; such being (goodness and providence, that each individual of the civi millions that cover the earth, may have nearly the same e ments as if he were the single lord of all."

I make no apology for this beautiful and spirited quot The sight of the various ships in our port filled the min Edward with sensations, perhaps not unlike those of Do Arnott when he wrote this luminous recapitulation of the bl ings of our country ; blessings, of which not even the attempts of discontented agitators, exerted to the utmost, destroy the value.

But where are we?—close to the spot where the bright vi of the night before vanished from Edward's eyes.

"Why, Jem!" said the spokesman to his messmate, "s gone!"

"So she is!" said his messmate to Jem.

"What's gone?" said Edward.

"Why that Yankee looking clipper, sir," said Jem, "a here yesterday."

The feelings of Edward Maxwell are indescribable : b fact was so. The Wilhelmina had sailed at one o'clock morning, and was, at the moment of their arrival off Rat coss stairs, somewhere about the Lower Hope.

Edward having ascertained this fact of course returned would have followed her by steam, or by the road, and hav haps yet overtaken her ; but the next morning was his si wedding day, and he could not be absent ; and thus, dispi and miserable, he returned to London, just as uninform ever about his fair *incognita*, and just a sfar as he was th before from any acquaintance with Captain Randolph o Wilhelmina.

CHAPTER XII.

"Wedded love is founded on esteem,
Which the fair merits of the mind engage,
For these are charms that never can decay:
But time, which gives new whiteness to the swan,
Improves their lustre."

FENTON.

DWARD now felt himself so completely beaten by circum-
:es, that he could scarcely rally his spirits sufficiently
ine in company; but he was conscious that it was a duty
:h, however painful the effort might be to himself, he most
'estionably ought to perform; and accordingly, with his fa-
sister, brother-in-law, Miss Geraldine O'Connochie, Miss
:her, and the two Mosses, he sat down to the hospitable
l of the surgeon, agitated by a host of passions and feel-
of all of which, however, to do him justice, regret at having
:entionally discovered what he could not but consider his
r's weakness, decidedly was uppermost.
: had formed a design which he nursed in secret, and which
oposed putting into execution the moment after the bride
)ridegroom had taken their departure for Brighton on the
ving day, which had for its object neither more nor less
discovering the residence of the captain of the good ship
elmina, which had sailed, and ascertaining whether the
tiful creature whom he had lost was actually the gentle-
s wife; or, if that were not the case, whether his wife, if
emained at home during his voyage, could give him any
unt of the young lady, who, he was quite convinced, was
senger in the Wilhelmina, and who, at the very moment
as thinking of her, was in all human probability, sailing
s the salt seas to some far distant port.
eally believe, that in the excitement of the ardent desire
ard felt to ascertain more particulars concerning his beau-
vision, the anxiety to convince himself of the true nature
s father's connexion and acquaintance with her, had no
siderable share; for most assuredly, as I have already
avoured to express, what he *had* seen, had so unsettled his

feelings, that he was not yet able to meet his respectable parent without restraint, or maintain a conversational intercourse with him, without a considerable degree of embarrassment.

As the period of Kate's marriage approached, Apperton seemed more and more occupied with her father; they were long and frequently closeted together, until at length Kate herself was summoned to the library, where she was directed to sign certain papers and parchments, which had been brought thither by the family solicitor, the intent or purport of which she neither understood nor sought to know. Her father's desire that she should affix her name to them was quite sufficient to ensure her obedience, convinced, as she was, that with his sanction she could do no act likely to produce pain or repentance at any future period of her existence.

When she left the library, after having performed the required ceremony, she felt as if she had signed the death-warrant of her happiness; and yet she could scarcely suffer such a feeling to hold any lengthened sway in her mind, because her own good sense told her, that she should have weighed all the circumstances of her marriage with Apperton at a time when the consideration of them might have been (had she chosen) followed by the rejection of his offer, and not have suffered matters to go to extremities, as they now had gone; besides, she struggled to check the emotions by which she felt her heart agitated, not only by the recollection that it was now too late to retract, but by a confirmed belief, that, let the extent of her happiness in marriage be what it might, she had in the connexion with Apperton as good a chance of contentedness (which was all she now hoped for) as she could have expected in any other.

As the day drew to its close, the countenance of Godfrey Moss assumed a hundred different expressions; while the bridegroom elect seemed to bear the near approach of his happiness with a philosophy which his enemies might have called indifference. He had passed great part of the forenoon in consultation with Maxwell, and some time of the afternoon in superintending the preparation of the chariot which he had bought at the bazaar. It was the first close carriage he had ever possessed, and of course was not a new one, for it may be remarked, that whenever a rising man in middling life mounts a carriage, he begins by buying a second-hand one; the next he has, perhaps, he builds, but never the first.

Edward was more than usually restless during the day; his

determination to explore the unknown regions of Bermondsey, and seek out the residence of Captain Randolph, of the good ship Wilhelmina, was fixed; but he found it would be impossible for him to execute it until the morrow: in the mean time, he endeavoured to console himself by thinking that the lovely girl might be the identical Mrs. Randolph, of whom the old waterman had spoken. She might, too, remain in England, perhaps at Bermondsey, while her husband was ploughing the salt seas—circling the round world:—and then—what then? —*there* stood his father, talking to Miss O'Connochie, in pre*cisely* the same attitude, with the same energetic actions, and the same winning smile, as he had seen him display while conversing with his mysterious beauty in the Green Park.

At length came dinner—tea—supper; the bridemaids departed, to return at nine o'clock in the morning—then went Apperton, for the last time, to his bachelor's room; Moss and his brother succeeded; and then retired to their respective beds the family themselves. It seemed now, that the affair was irrevocably concluded: in nine short hours, Kate Maxwell would have ceased to exist, and have begun a new life as Mrs. Apperton.

It turned out, however, that the main incident of the morrow, was not to be the only interesting one—but I must not anticipate.

At eight o'clock in the morning, nearly all the parties concerned in the momentous ceremony were assembled. By half-past eight Miss Fletcher arrived, looking very pale, and very cold, and very sleepy; and in another quarter of an hour Miss O'Connochie made her appearance, giving evidence, by her looks, that she was as unaccustomed to early rising as her fair colleague. Edward received them in the drawing-room, and for a moment thought Miss Fletcher looked interesting; in which opinion, no doubt, Miss Fletcher herself entirely coincided: but as he had now established a test of beauty in his mind, in the person of his mysterious young lady, the impression went off again very soon, notwithstanding a little skilful play with a pair of soft languishing blue eyes, into which "Miss F." (as Miss O'Connochie called her) contrived, upon this special occasion, to throw an expression of archness not usually exhibited by her, upon ordinary occasions, or in every-day society.

The Mosses made their appearance; the vicar desiring to know the precise minute at which the ceremony was to take place, in order that he might betake himself to the church some short time in advance of the "procession" in order

that they might not have to wait for his robing on their arrival.

Katherine had not yet shown herself; and Miss O'Connochie proceeded to the commencement of her important duties, by visiting the bride in her dressing-room. Apperton came in a new stone-blue coat and gilt buttons, a white waistcoat, fawn-coloured breeches, with bunches of bows at the knee, white silk stockings, and a new pair of pumps; nothing could be fresher than his appearance, his coat was so very blue, his buttons were so very bright, his hands were so very red, and his neckcloth was so very white, that he perfectly dazzled *Miss* Fletcher, whose cheek he proceeded to kiss upon his *entrance* into the dining-room.

Whether this is the privilege of a bridegroom, or an established custom upon similar occasions, I do not, as far as any personal knowledge of my own goes, pretend to know. The chaste salute, however, was a hearty smack, which produced a slight blush on Miss Fletcher's cheek, and an exclamation of "La! Mr. Apperton!" which, in its tone and expression, certainly partook more of surprise than anger. It would have made the thing personal not to have served Miss Geraldine O'Connochie in a similar way when she returned to the room; and accordingly she was subjected to precisely the same process: she, however, received the shock with infinitely greater philosophy and fortitude than Miss Fletcher; for, after the report upon her cheek, no sound of either anger or surprise was heard; on the contrary, she took the bridegroom's hand, and gave it what might be called a hearty shake.

At length down came Miss Maxwell herself, more cold and more sleepy than any of her friends and companions; her eyes betrayed the fact that she had slumbered little during the night; she smiled, and received the affectionate salute and embrace of her betrothed with a look of complacency, even beyond her father's hopes. Maxwell, upon being informed by Edward of the evolutions which had been performed by the stockbroker upon the cheeks of the ladies, very much applauded the scheme, and immediately taking advantage of the precedent repeated the operation upon both of them; after which Edward, for fear of being thought either dull or uncivil, followed the excellent example of his amiable parent.

Moss sat in his armed chair taking snuff, and looking on with wonder at what was passing.

"Now, Mousetrap," said the elder Maxwell, "now is *your* turn."

"My turn, at what?" said Godfrey, "psha, trash, slabber!" Moss had evidently been forced out of bed too early, and most undoubtedly would have said something excessively rude in half a moment, had not his brother announced his departure, in order to be in readiness for the ceremony; on which Godfrey, taking advantage of the carriage which was to convey the vicar to church, betook himself with that reverend gentleman in the advanced guard of the march.

In a country wedding there is a joyousness and gayety quite unknown in metropolitan marriages. The churchyard filled with expecting tenants, waiting to catch a glimpse of their landlord's daughter and the lover of her choice. Shouting children and ringing bells announce the coming of the bridal *cortège*, and mirth and jollity crown the conclusion of the ceremony. On the occasion of which I am now to speak, there was any thing but gayety or mirth. It was a wretched morning; there fell a mizzling rain through the peasoup atmosphere of London, which chilled every living thing, while a sort of smoky, misty, foggy vapour, hovering over the ground, made "darkness only visible." To prove in a few words the badness of the weather, it is only necessary to say, that, as the shining bridegroom handed his amiable Kitty into the carriage at her father's door, he observed, at that crisis of affairs, "that he thought they should have a wretched journey of it to Brighton."

Wretched!—Any journey with one's bride wretched!—What has rain or cold to do with the warmth and sunshine of the heart? Siberia, with the one loved being, would be as blooming, as cheering, and as fertile as Italy; a dungeon so accompanied more delightful than the brightest palace of the east without her; but not to Mr. Apperton,—who, like hackney-coach horses, had his work and recreation limited by the bills of mortality; who had not been twenty miles from the metropolis in as many years; who believed Richmond Hill one of the highest mountains in Europe, and considered Severndroog Castle, on Shooter's Hill, a perfectly inaccessible fortress. It is true, he had been to Margate, on the salt sea, in a steamboat; but, the moment he embarked at the Tower stairs, he sat himself down in a sort of coffee-house box in the cabin, with the daily newspaper in his pocket, and never left his corner till he was bumped ashore on Jarvis's jetty. A journey of fifty miles to Apperton formed such a large amount on the debit side of his day's happiness, that to have to undertake it, with all the accompaniments of wind and rain, was to him a matter of sufficient importance to make him forget, in the contemplation

of it, that he had to enjoy the society of an amiable, accomplished young woman during its progress, and that too with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and pre-eminences of a husband; forgetting, in short, that all her accomplishments, all her amiability, with herself into the bargain, were decidedly his own: but so it was—the weather had put him out of sorts, and the marriage procession, consisting of two carriages, had nearly reached St. James's church, where the indissoluble knot was to be tied, before he recovered his serenity, or rubbed quite dry and clean four or five of his new gilt buttons, which had been moistened by that indescribable humidity for which the atmosphere of London, at certain periods of the year, is celebrated.

At the Jermyn-street door of St. James's church descended the hymeneal party; Kate and her bridemaids; the two Maxwells and the bridegroom—Moss the layman, was already in the church, seated in a pew, out of which he wriggled himself as they approached.

"Infernal cold, Mack," said he; "I thought your coach had broken down. I have seen two pair of fools settled for life before you came, and now—ugh!"

This sound, indicative of his utter disapprobation of something, was followed by a look at Apperton, who certainly when frisky, was by no means graceful; indeed Kate herself thought she had never seen him to such a disadvantage, as when he was attempting to make the amiable in his way through the church.

It would be making what is too evidently bad, worse, to notice the frequent glances which were exchanged by Kate and her brother during their progress; they were not the mirthful, careless looks in which they were wont to converse; nor such as two persons, so connected, should at such a moment have adopted towards each other: they two knew the secrets of each other's heart; and the expression of poor Kate's countenance, when her fond and affectionate Edward last saw it, before she became a wife, convinced him that now the moment of trial was come, it would require all the strength of her mind—all the firmness of her resolution—and all the command which he knew her to have over herself, to go through the ceremony without sinking under the weight of her now useless affliction.

The elder Maxwell saw not this, or if he did, chose not to show that he did: he was gay and cheerful, and his fine countenance was heightened by a smile of contentment and plea-

sure. In the marriage now to be celebrated, he secured the interest and activity of his speculating son-in-law—he saw new comforts for his daughter—new riches for himself; and all that he lamented was, the loss of Jane's fortune, which he could not but feel Edward had literally thrown away.

They approached the altar—Miss O'Connochie was near the bride—Miss Fletcher held back because the damp had affected her hair, which was as completely out of curl as if it had never been under the hands or tongs of her maid. The weather, however, was so dark and gloomy, that the failure had more effect upon herself than upon anybody else; she was what a sportsman would call "dead beat" by this trivial mishap, and literally shrouded herself behind the hat and feathers of the gentle Geraldine, seeing that she, the Fletcher, had hoped on that very occasion to entangle in those very silken meshes the heart of Mr. Edward Maxwell.

The parties arranged—the service began—and proceeded—Katherine pronounced, "I will," firmly and audibly—she was given away—she repeated after the clergyman the sacred words in which her troth was plighted—the ring was on her finger—they knelt before the altar—they were irrevocably united—they were pronounced married—and Doctor Moss, of Fudley-cum-Pipes, gave the impressive blessing; at the conclusion of which, a voice which sounded close to Edward, responded "AMEN!" with an earnestness and fervour that could have inspired no casual auditor.

The peculiarity of tone, the devotion, the feeling, the warmth, the piety, with which it was breathed, attracted Edward's attention, and he involuntarily turned round to see who could have thus deeply interested themselves in the ceremony, when to his utter amazement he beheld, half concealed by one of the pillars which support the gallery—his unknown beauty.

Their eyes met—she caught hold of the object which had partly concealed her, for support. Edward was forced not only to remain where he was, but to seem to attend to the service, the greater part of which was yet to come. Where his feelings, his devotion, his fraternal love, or his filial duty, were, I know not; his thoughts were not his own, for he could not recal them from the object he had just beheld; he could hear his heart beat while the ceremony was proceeding, and not daring again to look around, heard also the footsteps of some person retiring along the matted aisle. There he was; she would be gone before he could quit the church. What then? Why was she there? What was the link that bound her to his

father? for he could not doubt hat he was aware of her being in the church, after what he had himself seen in the park.

Then she was *not* gone in the ship which had sailed—*what* could she be doing on board such a vessel, and at such a time as that at which he had traced her to it—in the evening! It was now clear, as he thought, that the connexion, whatever it was, which he knew from his own knowledge united her and his parent, could be in no way dishonourable, or he never would have brought her, or permitted her to have come to witness the ceremony of his daughter's marriage: of course it was by *his* permission, perhaps by his invitation, that *she was* there; and then why should this female, unknown to *him by* name, and to his sister even by sight, respond to a *blessing* invoked upon her, and a prayer for her happiness, with a fervour and ardency which nothing short of intimate consanguinity could inspire? Conceive what a crowd of thoughts, of fears, of doubts, of hopes, of pains, and anxieties were whirling in poor Edward's brain during the explanation of the marriage duties, which seemed to him hours in length, and which at *its* conclusion left him in amazement,—with which word, as all the idle readers of matrimony too well know, the salutary lecture ends.

He stood like a statue, unconscious of what was going on; and when the rest of the party retired to the vestry, he lingered in the church, hoping to see the lovely vision again; but he was disappointed, although his mind was freshly agitated by seeing his father do precisely what he himself was doing—he saw *him* evidently looking for somebody; and what added to his conviction that the young lady was there by his father's desire, and with his concurrence, was the fact that the old gentleman, in his search, crossed from where he had been standing during the ceremony, directly to the pillar where she had so ill concealed herself, and even walked down that aisle evidently in search of her.

In fact, this put an end to all doubt on Edward's part, and he resolved, the moment his sister and her husband were on the road to Brighton, to commence a series of operations, by which he should perhaps discover the girl; and if that failed, he determined to open his heart to his father himself, and take the consequences, for he found the struggle not only between love and duty, but between duty and disrespect, so strong, that he could endure it no longer.

In the middle of his very unpleasant reflections on the subject, he literally shuddered, when his father, coming up to him,

put his arm through his, and expressed his satisfaction at *the event* of the morning, and added to Edward, that during the absence of the Appertons at Brighton, until he joined them there, he, Ned, must spare him more of his time at home than he had latterly done; "for," said he, "when my Kate is away, Ned, who have I to console or cheer me but *you?*" "Why," thought Ned, "one of the prettiest creatures in England;" and the thought was so predominant, that he as nearly as possible had taken that very opportunity of divulging the secret knowledge of his parent's intimacy with the fair lady, which he possessed; but he checked himself for the moment, and reserved the *denouement* for a period when the old gentleman could better afford him time and attention to listen to it.

All the necessary forms to complete the union of the Appertons having been gone through, the party returned through the same fog, and mist, and wet which had covered the procession with dinginess, to Burlington Gardens, where what, if it had been advertised in the newspapers by people of higher rank, would have been called a dejeuné a la fourchette, was ready prepared, in which art vied with nature in the production of all the delicacies of the season, with which the tables *literally* groaned. However, as Gunter had no share in the proceedings, and Maxwell had no servants sufficiently interested in his private proceedings to make an article of it for the newspapers, I shall take the liberty of saying that they found a remarkably comfortable breakfast on their return, and that although Katherine did not herself partake of it, (seeing that she retired to divest herself of her wedding dress, and habit herself more suitably to the time of day, the season of the year, and the journey she was about to take,) all the other characters of the drama performed their several parts with wonderful activity and judgment, and among them, who strove more than Godfrey Moss and the convivial vicar of Fudley-cum-Pipes?

After sundry attacks upon fowls, tongues, hams, prawns, marmelades, eggs, thin salutary slices of broiled bacon, tea, coffee, and cocoa, Apperton proceeded, like his bride, to assume a costume better calculated for travelling than that in which he was married; and just as he made his appearance, booted and great-coated, (all new,) the King-street bazaar carriage drove up to the door—brides may mourn, when I say there were but a pair of posters and no favours! This last omission, however, was at Katherine's earnest desire; indeed the absence of *eclat* in any part of the affair was studied and

premeditated, since it appeared both to Apperton and his wife, that nothing could possibly be more disagreeable than giving notoriety to the novelty of their situation to every passing stranger.

Kate at length re-appeared among her friends. She was as calm and placid as if it was Miss O'Connochie's wedding they were celebrating instead of her own. When at length the carriage was pronounced ready, she wept some tears as her father led her towards it—but her grief was transient, since she knew she should soon be joined by her family.

Separations themselves are hateful things, descriptions of them therefore must be hateful too—so shut the door;—they are gone—the bridesmaids are inquiring for their shawls and "things," the Mosses getting fidgetty—Maxwell is particularly anxious to go out in his carriage, and Edward still more anxious to discover Mrs. Randolph—for such, in his own mind, he had now determined his beauty to be—wife to the captain of the Wilhelmina, and in this state of things the party separated; but, as far as related to Edward and the two Mosses, only to meet again at six o'clock at Maxwell's.

When all the whirl and worry of the ceremony were over, there seemed a new and universal dulness spread through Maxwell's house. Edward went into the drawing-rooms; the piano-forte was closely shut up, the furniture was all set in order, every chair was in its place, without the slightest appearance of comfort or use. Kate's work-table, which stood in one of the windows, was locked, and her own writing-table, which used to be covered with notes, and scraps, and albums, and all sorts of nonsense, was now formally set out with the inkstand in the middle, and the paper, and the paper-knife, and the wax, and the blotting-paper all in a regular display,—he almost thought he heard his sister's voice, and he walked and wandered about the rooms with a feeling of indescribable unhappiness; he almost began to wish that Mrs. Epsworth had stayed for the wedding, and stayed in town afterward; but the old lady, whose conscience, I suppose, smote her occasionally, did not seem to think that remaining the constant and sole companion of the younger Maxwell, who had lost her niece, and the elder Maxwell, who appeared never to forget that he had lost her fortune, would be perfectly agreeable, and accordingly betook herself to her home, where, the centre of a small circle of her own, she had the power of extorting something like respect, even if she failed to obtain the affection of her neighbours.

Edward, as it was, found home unbearable; and having established in his mind the certainty of his success in pursuing the captain's wife to Bermondsey, started forthwith in the direction of that outskirt of the metropolis, calculating that great expedition was not absolutely necessary, since it would require some time for the fair object of his inquiry to regain her home, after having so strangely witnessed the ceremony of his sister's marriage in the parish church of Saint James, Westminster.

How *soon* a knot of intimate friends, in these days of steam and expeditious travelling, are scattered and spread like globules of quicksilver under the pressure of the finger! Three or four days ago, Maxwell's house was the receptacle of a nest of relations, brought together it must be confessed under somewhat extraordinary circumstances—to-day, how separated! The volatile major, and his happy wife, were on the continent —Kate, and her any thing but volatile husband, were half way to Brighton—Mrs. Epsworth was concocting a snug tea and card party for her neighbours—the Mosses, who were before *absent*, had now returned to London—Edward was on his way to Bermondsey—and Edward's father was on his way to visit his patients.

The explorations of Captain Parry towards the North Pole have met with high eulogy and honourable reward. The great Cook, though more successful in his outset, was more unfortu*nate* in the termination of his discoveries. Columbus stands *im*mortalized by his deeds—Vancouver, Raleigh, Drake, all are high-sounding names; but Edward, emulating all their enterprises and transcending all their toils, explored and succeeded in discovering the residence of Captain Randolph of the Wilhelmina, in the Grange Road, Bermondsey, at which destination he arrived before three P. M. on the day of his departure from London.

He collected his information respecting the captain's dwelling from sundry small boys bearing beer pots in wooden cases, after the fashion of those parts; and of certain of the natives habituated to the making and selling of bread, until, by comparing notes, and putting "that, and that together," as they say, he found himself in front of a small smart house, before which, within green rails, was laid out a neat "fore court," a circular box-bound bed stood in the centre of the gravel, and a white pipe-clayed stony path led to the door, to which the ascent was by four steep steps.

In one of the drawing-room windows, (for there were two) stood a cage containing a green cockatoo. In the parlour

window (for there was but one) stood on a small table another cage, containing a blue cockatoo; in the kitchen window which opened into the area, stood a huge perch, on which roosted a grey parrot of much larger growth than either of the others. As Edward, "beer directed," ascended the steps, he perceived, exactly in the centre of the door, a brass plate engraved with the desired word, RANDOLPH, in capital letters of large dimensions.

Thus satisfied, the youthful traveller knocked; nobody appeared, but he heard through the flimsy partition of the panels, a hurry and scuffling, indicative of "putting things away," and, after a little delay, a maid-servant in black opened the door, and forthwith the house gave out a powerful smell of cockatoos and onions.

"Is Mrs. Randolph at home?" said Edward.

"Missis is at home, sir," said the maid: "but she ant by no means, what you would call well, sir—what's your business, sir?"

"Why," said Edward, who was not a little puzzled at the question; "I—I only wished to speak to her."

"Please tell me your name, sir," said the servant.

"Mrs. Randolph doesn't know my name," replied Edward.

"Show the gemman up into the first floor," said a voice from below, which, if it were not that of the great grey parrot in the kitchen window, sounded very like it.

"This way, sir," said the maid, who gradually softened in her manner towards Edward, as she found her mistress inclined to admit his visit.

And accordingly Edward followed her up a carpeted ladder railed on the side, and called a flight of stairs; in two moderate strides he reached the front drawing-room, where he was left for a few minutes to contemplate the surrounding objects.

Over the chimney-piece was a looking-glass, which produced upon any thing reflected by it a similar effect to that which is obtained by looking at one's face in a spoon; it had a row of gilt knobs round it, and a figure of Britannia, surrounded by bales, shot, and anchors, on the top of the frame. Two pasteboard chimney sweepers, their bags forming what are called "spill cases," and two painted wine glasses filled with sand, constituted the remaining ornaments of the "mantel-shelf," and were flanked by two squat black iron candlesticks, hung round with glass drops. In the very centre appeared a watch, which did not go, placed in a marble case, with little

columns on its sides, and a little hole in its middle for the dial to come through; added to these, was "pretty cocky" in the window, as before noticed.

A brown japanned tea-urn reposed on a painted wooden slab, in a recess on one side of the fire-place, resting on a scarlet and green rug of Mrs. Randolph's own workmanship; and on what she would have called the wooden slab, "to answer," in the other recess, stood a large glass beaker, with a snaked stem, imported by her loving spouse at some former time from Holland, surrounded by divers glasses and tumblers, among which lay Captain Randolph's own peculiar punch-ladle with a whalebone handle, and a Queen Anne's guinea at the bottom of the bowl. In two of the largest tumblers were stuck the eggs of ostriches, and under each slab was placed a china jar some two feet high.

The walls of the apartment, besides the looking-glass, were adorned with a portrait of Lord Nelson, two prints of sea fights, and a view of Macao. The pictures of two persons, painted in oil, were pendant among the prints; one, as it might naturally be supposed, being the effigies of Captain Randolph, the other the likeness of a woman of the broadest possible dimensions, with the bluest eyes, the brownest hair, and the reddest cheeks that picture ever had: human beings never possessed any thing like them; but the sight of them was death to Edward, who saw in the likenesses a "sign" of his approaching mortification and disappointment. Of course the lady must be Mrs. Randolph; and here was he penned up in the drawing-room of the house, to be received by the dame whose resemblance he already saw before him, and, having been received, to make his way out again as well as he possibly could.

But then the lovely girl might be the daughter—who could tell? Time, the "edax rerum," which levels all things, alone could decide; and to say truth, old Chronos, in the present instance, was not very long about his work, for in less than three minutes the drawing-room door opened, and presented to the eyes of the embarrassed Edward a human being who bore exactly the same resemblance to the picture on the wall, as monsters at fairs do to the show-cloths which are exhibited as tempters on the outsides of booths and caravans.

"What's your pleasure, sir?" said Mrs. Randolph, whose roseate cheeks, contrasted with her sable garments, gave her a "rouge et noir" appearance quite terrific; not to speak of the predominant flavour of onions, which it should seem she had

herself been frying as an agreeable addition to her beef-steaks.

"Why, madam," said Maxwell, "I—I really only *wanted* to ask a question."

"Well, sir, out with it at once, and no offence neither," said the lady.

"Captain Randolph, I believe, commands the Wilhelmina?" said Edward.

"Yes, sir,—the Villelmeeny," said Mrs. Randolph, "and igh time it is he should; he's been now a sailor, man and boy, these six-and-twenty years, sir; and it arn't afore he shud *be* that he's got to be cappun."

"I am quite sure of his merits, madam," said Edward—who really didn't know exactly what to say.

"Why, as to his merrits, ye see, sir," said the lady, "there's them as has got gumtion and them as arn't; and my old man, I *will* say it for him, knows what's what, as well as is neighburs; but its hup-ill work, them there sea affairs is, if ye harn't got nothing to begin with; and many a night I *have* laid and eared the vind a vistling down my bedroom chimly in the vinter, when my poor Bill has been a vorking avay on the salt seas; but it's not of no kind of use a fretten, sir, and now is turn's com'd, you see, to be cappun, and the Villelmeeny is part is hone; he's part properioter of her, sir; and so, if it's about ship business you are come, perhaps I can give you a hanser."

"Captain Randolph has sailed, I—" said Edward, inquiringly.

"From the river," said the lady; "but I expects to hear from him at Portsmouth, and p'raps Plymouth, afore he's reglarly off, you know."

"My question," said Edward, "merely related to his passengers; indeed, I thought—I am sure you will forgive me—I understood that you were going with him on the voyage."

"Not I, sir," said Mrs. Randolph; "no—no—one's enough to go skimbling skambling all over the world: who'd take care of our bits of things if it wan't for me? there's my poor birds, why, la, I vallies em just like human creturs—feeds 'em every day myself, and when they die, bless their pretty innocent [illegible], I gets a neighbor of mine to stuff em and put em in glass cases, where they look as nat'ral as life, and costs nothing for eating; no—I harn't a turn for the sea, sir; beside it an't a nice place for women, as I thinks."

"You have no family, I presume, ma'am," said Edward.

"And why so, sir?" said Mrs. Randolph; "is it because

I'm fond of dumb hannymals you think that? I begs your pardon, I have a darter, as nice a gal as ever you clapped your two eyes upon."

"Does she visit the Wilhelmina sometimes, when she is in the river?" said Edward, who could not help admiring the good nature with which the mistress of the house answered his questions.

"To be sure she does," said the mother, "but why d'ye want to know so much about my darter, sir?"

"*I* repeat, madam," said Edward, "that I have a thousand *apologies* to make, but I will be very candid with you. I have seen a young lady with whom I am most anxious to have five minutes' conversation; I have reason to think she is related to your family, or to Captain Randolph; and now that you tell me the Wilhelmina is yet at one of the outports, I really believe that the young lady in question is somehow connected with the ship, and—"

"Oh! la! sir," said the good-humoured lady, "if ye want to see my darter you shall see her, in the shaking out of a reef. She's no reason to be ashamed to show her face, and if it's any law question, as I suspect it is, and you are come here to pump me about my old man, why, knowing as I do that his character's as clear as christial, I'll help you to sift it to the bottom: we fear nobody—not we."

"My dear ma'am," said Edward, "I assure you I—"

"Oh, you shall see her," said Mrs. Randolph; and, putting her head over the balustrades, she called to Martha, the maid, to send up Miss Caroline. "No, sir," continued the lady, returning to the charge, "we are all fair and above board in this house; you shall see my gal in welcome."

This was the last hope; it might even now be the phantom imbodied at Bermondsey. After a few minutes' delay, he heard a heavyish step stumping up the little staircase, and the door opening, presented to his eyes an exceedingly broad, squat girl of about fifteen, in a black frock, with a well fitting Holland pinafore, very bright eyes, very black hair, a snub nose, and a laughing, good-humoured countenance.

"Want me, ma?" said Caroline.

"No, Cary, not particler; it is only for this here gemman to look at you, my dear," said Mrs. Randolph.

Caroline blushed up to the eyes, and all over as much of her neck as was visible.

"I really have so very much to apologize," said Maxwell; "you have quite mistaken my object: I merely thought that a

young lady who was on board Captain Randolph's ship the other evening, might have been part of your family, and I was anxious to have said a few words to her."

"Young lady aboard my husband's ship!" said Mrs. Randolph, whose cheeks began to be more crimson than ever; "go down stairs, my dear Caroline; you have passed muster on deck, as your pa says—go below."

Caroline accordingly went, but not with the same sort of alacrity she had discovered in ascending. "Now, sir," said the matron, evidently getting into a passion, "what is it you want here? If you have any questions to ax, as I have said afore, I am ready and willing to answer them; I have told you, I 'spose, what you wanted to know, and now what else is it?"

"Why—can you inform me, madam," said Edward, "what passengers go with Captain Randolph this voyage—and where they are going to?"

"I can answer that in an uncommon short space of time," said Mrs. Randolph, "for he hasn't no passengers whatsumever."

"Then, madam, you have told me all I wanted to learn," said Ned; "and again I must beg you to excuse the great liberty I have taken, and to accept my best thanks for your kindness."

"Oh, as to the matter o' that," replied the lady, "there's no great kindness in answering when you are axed; I'm bound to be civil to every body as comes upon my husband's business, as I thought you did; howsumever, it seems as how you come on your own."

Edward felt he had no business there at all.

"I wish you a very good morning, ma'am," said Maxwell.

"Good day, sir," replied Mrs. Randolph; "here, Martha—show this here gemman out."

These last words were spoken with an emphasis not to be misunderstood. It conveyed, "mind he does not take any thing with him;" and accordingly, down went Ned, and glad enough he was, when he found himself at the bottom of the pipe-clay steps, and well out of the house, although he had taken nothing by his motion. On casting his eye towards the parlour window, he found that the cockatoo of that station had been removed, and that young pinafore had taken the bird's place—whether the better to watch his departure, or exhibit her own pretty little plump person, Ned did not stop to consider.

This expedition, however, and its failure, produced a very

powerful effect upon Edward's mind; and having a somewhat long walk before him, he threw together all the circumstances of the case, and felt resolved to delay no longer opening his heart to his father.

The deep impression the girl had made upon him, rooted as it even then seemed to be, might, perhaps, be extirpated (not that he saw the probability); and he would at all events have felt bound to stifle it, until he could ascertain enough of her station and character, to justify a serious appeal to the old gentleman; but the combined circumstances of seeing his parent in earnest and confidential communication with this very individual, during a meeting purposely planned, and for which she had been waiting in a common highway of milliners' assignations; and her presence at his sister's wedding, which could not have been accidental, the earnestness and fervour with which she joined in the service, not generally interesting to young ladies who are not principal performers in the ceremony; all so clearly proved the existence of some tie between them, beyond that which had accidentally (and so marvellously, as it should seem) connected them, that Edward decided if he were left *tête-á-tête* with his father, that very day, after dinner, he would at once put an end to a doubt and mystery which, while they greatly detracted from his filial respect, continued to put a restraint upon his conversation when directed to old Maxwell, which he could no longer patiently endure.

The fates seemed to favour his design of inducing the *denouément*; for after the very dullest of dinners had ended, he discovered that Moss and his brother had accepted seats in a private box át Drury-lane Theatre, which circumstance would most agreeably and conveniently leave him and his parent alone.

How many times have men during their lives wished for an opportunity to achieve some end, to carry some point, and yet, when it arrived, felt that the difficulty of breaking the ice was too great to be attempted. There is somewhere extant, an old song illustrative of this unpleasant timidity in a lover, which fortunately I do not recollect, for it is so very apposite, that if I had remembered it, I must have quoted it and altogether I am inclined to believe that it is not quite correct; leaving, therefore, the difficulties of love out of the question, let us present to view the two Maxwells alone, for the first time after the younger one had made the discovery to the disadvantage of the elder one; the Mosses having retired, and left the field open for the conflict.

A silence of some length succeeded the departure of the eccentric brothers; the younger Maxwell took the poker and stirred the fire, and broke, with infinite skill and considerable assiduity, a large coal, which surmounted all its sable brethren of Lambton's main, in the grate.

"It's rather cold to-night, Ned," said Maxwell.

"Yes, sir," said Edward, looking at the fire, and seeing amid its flickering brilliancy, the Green Park—the meeting—St. James's church—the vision behind the column—Captain Randolph's house—fat Caroline in the pinafore—Mrs. Randolph and the three cockatoos.

"Where have you been this morning," said the elder Maxwell, "walking or riding?"

"Walking, sir," said Ned—giving the fire another digging sort of poke.

"I have been to Hendon," said the elder Maxwell, "to see a poor fellow who is suffering dreadfully, and there I was kept till I came home to dinner; I must go there again in the morning—a hunting fall merely—but the consequences are extremely serious."

"I have been as far as Bermondsey to-day," said Edward.

"Bermondsey!" echoed the elder Maxwell—"what could have taken you to Bermondsey?"

"Curiosity, sir," said Edward; "I had an object."

"A search after your fair phantom, Ned?" said the father.

"Exactly so, sir," replied the son.

"That's a search I would recommend you to give up," said Maxwell, filling his glass, and putting the bottle to Edward. "Such a person as you describe that young woman to be—I mean a young woman walking alone, without either protector or servant, and in a part of the town where ladies are not in the habit of walking the streets as amateurs, can come to no good; and you might, perhaps, entangle yourself in some connexion which would be highly injurious, either to your respectability in forming it, or to your happiness in abandoning it."

"I have seen the young lady twice, sir, since I mentioned her to you," said Edward, looking firmly at his father—his hands growing as cold as ice, his throat parched, and his cheeks burning.

"Oh, I suppose," said his father, "you didn't choose to communicate, for fear of Moss's raillery."

"No, sir," said Edward, "I had other—better motives."

"How d'ye mean? Ned—you look agitated," said Maxwell; "what's the meaning of this?"

"My heart is very full, sir," said Edward; "I am placed in a situation the most painful—I—I cannot bear to say what I know—but I know something that I feel I ought not to conceal from you."

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Maxwell, "has Katherine told you any thing?"

"What, sir?" said Edward, alarmed at his father's earnestness.

"Answer me *that*, Edward," said his father, pale and trembling, "in an instant—has your sister—has *my* daughter, Kate, told you what she—but stop—I know she has not—she could not. What d'ye you mean you *know?*—Speak—you have never had concealment from me on any important point, nor I from my family."

"If I were sure of that," said Edward, "I should be too happy."

"To what do you refer?" asked Maxwell, still violently affected with a mixed feeling of doubt and alarm—"nothing relative to Kate—nothing that she has told you?"

"On the contrary, sir," said Edward, "she knows nothing of it, nor would I that she should for the world."

"Explain, then," said Maxwell, recovering with this announcement all his wonted presence of mind; "explain, then, what you *do* mean?"

"It is most difficult—most painful," said Edward; "but I am sure, for all our sakes, it is best I should be explicit."

"To what does it relate?" said Maxwell.

"To the young creature whose beauty and manners have so seriously affected my happiness," said Edward.

"Bravo!" said Maxwell, filling his glass to the brim, as if millions of pounds of care and anxiety were taken from his heart at the moment—"here's to her health, Ned, be she whom she may."

"Oh! father," said Edward, "the moment is come—you and I cannot—must not drink to that being's health, whoever she may be, together. It is against the laws of society—perhaps, of heaven!"

"How!" exclaimed Maxwell, "are you mad, Ned?"

"No, no, sir," exclaimed Edward, "I trust not—but I have seen her so situated—so placed—nay, this very day I beheld her"——

At *this moment the* dinner-parlour door was thrown open,

and exhibited the two Mosses returned from the play, whence, finding that in consequence of a violent cold Mr. Kean could not perform, they had beaten a rapid retreat, without even leaving the carriage, and were now returned to enjoy a snug, sociable evening, make a party at whist with Maxwell and his son, and wind up the night with some roasted oysters and a jorum of punch, to the health and happiness of the bride and bridegroom at Brighton.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Through storms and tempests so the sailor drives,
Whilst every element in combat strives;
Loud roars the thunder, fierce the lightning flies,
Winds wildly rage, and billows tear the skies,
Safe through the war her course the vessel steers,
The haven gained, the pilot drops his fears,
Thence smiling, he to smoother scenes looks on,
And thinks no more of dangers past and gone."

SHIRLEY.

THERE were certain of the ancients who, for a month after marriage, lived upon mead—hence the honeymoon. Lord Byron has improved upon this, and calls his first month of connubial *bliss* the "treacle moon." Certain it is, that all persons below the rank of sovereign princes are left to themselves during the eight-and-twenty days immediately succeeding the nuptial ceremony. Crowned heads are not so particular; a king is married on Wednesday—shows himself and his consort on Thursday—perhaps attends a theatrical representation on the Friday, and goes in state to church the following Sunday, as if he had been a Benedick half his life.

What the customs ordinarily observed with the race of stock-brokers upon such occasions may be, I cannot take upon myself to say; but whatever is the general rule touching their temporary seclusion, it must be broken in upon as far as Apperton and his bride are concerned; for painful as it may be to the reader to be cut short of a very important explanation, by the inopportune arrival of the tarantula brothers, it is absolutely necessary that I should waft him to Brighton faster than

Goodman in his Times, with all his speed and security, could convey him.

On the morning succeeding the wedding-day, Apperton whose plans and pursuits appeared not in the slightest degree hanged by the great alteration which had taken place in his circumstances) proceeded, under the direction of the mistress of the house which they had taken, first to the market to cheapen fish, and then to the post-office, to inquire for his letters. In the former business, considering it was his *debût* in Brighton bartering, he was more successful than in the latter; for although he bitterly complained to Mrs. Gunn that brills and skate "looked up," he found by intelligence from London, that certain shares and foreign securities, as they were unaptly called, were looking down. The "postscriptum" of one of his correspondent's letters hinted at the suspected frailty of a well-known city firm, and at several other matters, ill-suited to the day on which they were received.

His aspect and manner when he returned to breakfast were any thing but joyous; and with such a treasure as Katherine in his possession it was clear that he had some other treasure to which his heart was more powerfully allied. It was, it must be owned, rather disappointing to Mrs. Apperton to hear her spouse dividing the breakfast hour between bitterly abusing the cook for spoiling the whitings, and summing up little rows of figures with the greatest solicitude; nay, she was sufficiently a judge of countenances to see that her dearly beloved would have given the world, if decency had permitted it, to put himself into one of the stages, and start for London that very morning.

Such is the influence of the demon Avarice, such the overwhelming power of gambling, when once it has gained possession of the mind,—for gambling Apperton's decidedly was, without even the excuse of temporary excitement, or personal participation in the actual progress of his system; all his success or failure depended upon events over which he himself had no control, and the course of which he could only guess at. To be sure, a stockbroker has one advantage over every other gamester—he gambles while he is asleep as well as when he is awake; the great game goes on night and day; and it should seem, by Apperton's appearance on the present occasion, that the throws of the preceding morning had been very much against him.

It was impossible for Katherine not to feel how completely she had become the secondary object of his attention since the

arrival of his letters; and to relieve a sort of aching pain at her heart, which she would rather have died than acknowledge, she turned to the window, whence she could behold the fine combination of sea and sunshine which, even in the depth of winter or early spring, gives to treeless Brighton all the splendour and brilliancy of a summer's day.

It is seldom (and before the packet-boats to Dieppe were established there, it was still more seldom,) that the view from Brighton is enlivened by the appearance of vessels larger than her own fishing-boats, or mayhap a collier brig, whose venturous master drives her to the end of West-street to unload her useful cargo, at the hazard of his craft; but occasionally the sameness is relieved, and accident gives the walkers and watchers a treat in the shape of some large outward or homeward-bound ship, thrown within the range of the well-levelled telescopes on the cliffs or the beach.

This lucky chance turned up to-day, and Katherine exclaimed, with a sort of enthusiasm quite incomprehensible to her husband,—

"Look—look—Apperton, what a large ship there is in the distance!"

"Dear me, Kate," said Apperton, "you frightened me—I thought you had seen something terrible. Is there any thing very wonderful in seeing a ship on the sea?"

"Why *here*," said Kate, chilled to the heart by the manner in which she had been checked by her husband; "here they do *not* so often see ships,—I only mentioned it on that account besides, nothing can be more beautiful, as an object, than a large vessel under sail."

"I've no taste for ships," said Apperton; "what day does your father propose coming down to us?"

"Monday, I think," said Mrs. Apperton.

"I should like very much to see him," said Apperton, "you would not mind my writing to ask him to come down to us to-morrow?"

"Me! no," said Kate—too truly; "I am always happier in my father's society than out of it."

"Then I'll tell him so," said Apperton; "what, is *that* the ship you were talking of—La! I see nothing so very beautiful about *her*."

"Her distance from us renders her not sufficiently distinct," said Katherine.

"See—d'ye see that smoke?" said Apperton.

"A gun," said Katherine; "she wants a pilot, I suppose."

›n my word," said Apperton, " You might be taken
of the old bathing-women here, you seem to know so
›out all these matters,—I should not think she could
pilot now."
lon't see why she should not," said Katherine; " the
s and difficulties of channel navigation are infinitely
: hence to the river Thames than any where else; and
ay rely upon it, if she have no pilot yet, she will not
ed without one—but she seems rapidly approaching the

'ell come, let's go and see and hear all about it," said
:on—" pop on your ' things,' and we'll walk down to this
ıgled pier, and find out what it all means.—There goes
· gun."
', who seemed to dread inaction, and sought, even in
e bustle of these uninteresting inquiries, a relief from
meness of *home*—early days for such a feeling—was
harmed with the proposal, and hurrying on her " things,"
husband called them, was ready in five minutes to take
fered arm in the walk. The excitement of the arrival
ead, and numbers of people were flocking towards the
ier, which Apperton pronounced the only spot to see
, in which opinion Kate entirely coincided—he at that
not being aware, since he had never yet danced on its
hat a small sum would be demanded, by way of toll,
exhibition thereon.
ıs curious to see the little struggle between pride and
n, and ease, and economy, while he exchanged a six-
for the purpose of obtaining admission for himself and
:. There was no hesitation as to the disbursement; but
e had lodged the balance, as he would have called it, in
t-pocket, he could not stifle an expression of his belief,
› chain-pier must be a very good speculation, and of a
ıat he had bought some shares in it when they were
to him.
ıave seen this bride and bridegroom pass along the
ıde, on to the swinging floor of the picturesque toy,
ıas done more towards improving the appearance of dear
righton than any thing that has happened to it since its
tion, any body would have set them down for a long-
d couple, and naturally have cast an eye behind for a
of nursery maids, and little " eyasses" under their
Kate felt the influence of the sun and the sea breeze,
› exercise, and *the* general gayety that surrounded her,

and was quite in spirits; and her husband, to whom n matters were novelties, abstracted his thoughts for the m from Change-alley and Threadneedle-street, and fel porarily interested in the spectacle.

"What is the ship?" said Apperton to one of the bo who was in attendance in hopes of a job.

"She's a Hingyman, sir," said the fellow.

"A Hingyman!" repeated Apperton. "Ah!"

"I suppose," said the man, "she didn't like coming t the Needles last night, and so com'd round outside by th o' the Isle o' Wight, and made the land somewheres here this morning. She'll send her purser ashore here, I da sir, with the despatches, and mayhap, some of the passeng

Apperton's mind was instantly at work upon this inform in order to ascertain whether any early intelligence cou gathered from any of the people who landed, by which he be able to make a hit in the market; but he was su attracted from the dream of activity into which he *had* by recollecting that he had a wife, whom he could not *de* quit at the moment, even though the riches of Golconda sented themselves to his view at the end of Leadenhall-s

Meanwhile the platform at the pier-head became cro and Apperton, anxious to indulge himself with a peep "Hingyman," applied his eye to a glass which was civilly offered him by a very respectable old man, and, satisfied himself, was forthwith relieved of the odd two- worth of balance in his coat-pocket. Again he stiff resentment and mortification, and only murmured, "Dear however," and drew away his lady, lest she should be with a desire of inspecting the vessel more minutely.

"That must be a profitable glass to that poor man," Apperton. "Curious propensities people have—by w half an hour, they could see this ship as perfectly for n as they now do by paying for it; however, live and let it is an innocent way of making money, at all events."

Apperton, however, was not quite correct in his calcul on this point; the result did not by any means justi anticipations; suddenly the sails of the "Hingyman" w aback, and a large shore-boat, which had gone off t an hour before, was observed alongside rapidly filling wit sengers, who were seen dropping into it from her sides. few minutes the "Hingyman" filled again, and with a almost right aft, and yards nearly square, began bowling alo

her way to Blackwall, leaving the boat, like a black speck upon the face of the water, behind her.

Upon this little tossing object all eyes were now fixed; and, after nearly another hour's suspense, she neared the shore. The crowds of sight-hunters had so thronged the railings at the pier-head, that Apperton and his lady had no chance of seeing the boat, or indeed what was landed from it; and as a *genteel* crowd is uniformly the most boisterous that can possibly be imagined, they withdrew their slender claims, and satisfied themselves with a sidelong glance at the newly arrived voyagers. *The first* who passed them was, as the barrowman anticipated, *the purser*, followed by two men conveying huge boxes of letters and despatches. To him succeeded an elderly gentleman, cheeks yellow, hair gray, and a pigtail fluttering in the breeze; wearing green spectacles, and a white hat, a great coat, nankeen pantaloons and gaiters, and carrying an umbrella: he was accompanied by a kitmager in full costume, whose muslin shivered in the wind, and who chattered, like a parrot, a compound of all the languages of the East; then succeeded the two master Mackirkincrofts and their three sisters, with two or three ayahs, and a European servant, who appeared to devote his especial attention to Mrs. Mackirkincroft herself, evidently an invalid, and mother of the small brood of Mackirkincrofts now fresh imported.

At this period of the procession, one of the Brighton boatmen hailed a boy, who had just jumped ashore, and bid him go and get a fly for a gentleman in the boat. This to Apperton's unaccustomed ear sounded oddly; fly catching, at that season, puzzled him, and his wonder was not decreased when he heard an additional direction given to the lad not to bring a horse fly.

Kate saw the astonishment of her innocent husband, and forthwith proceeded to enlighten him; and by her explanation of the fact, that the hireable carriages at Brighton, and now at all watering places are called "flies," not only relieved him from a strange mystification at the moment, but cleared up a doubt which had arisen in his mind in the morning, as to certain words painted on the railing, near the cliff, which ran thus: "Not more than three flies to stand here." This had been a poser to him before breakfast; he could not at all comprehend it; but was yet too proud to endeavour to ascertain why there should not be sufficient room in Brighton for people and flies too; or why they should be so

particular as to the number of those little animals permitted to rest themselves in any one particular place.

The motley group of voyagers, amounting altogether to ten, I think, had reached the gates of the esplanade, whither the Appertons had followed them, before the arrival of the *fly* which was destined to convey another of them from the pier. At length it came, and the pure spirit of curiosity prompted the newly married couple to see the magnificent nabob, who would not condescend to touch the earth with the sole of his foot, even though it were the free soil of Britain. However, the fly penetrated through the crowd, where they did not care to follow; so, on their return homewards, they permitted the important *qui hi* to pass them in his little vehicle. Any hope of a glimpse at his supereminence, was vain; the glasses were up and the blinds down, so that, if the governor-general himself had landed, there could not have been much greater fuss about his being exhibited. Apperton and his wife, however, were followed in the course of the throng by two of the boatmen carrying baggage, and by a European servant belonging to the great invisible.

"Your master seems pretty baddish," said one of the boatmen.

"I believe you," said the man; "I never expected he'd see England no more; howsumever, he's a vast sight better now than he was, and right glad he was to get ashore the first place as ever he could; it's his temper as has saved his life; he's the best-temperdest cretur as ever trod shoe leather."

The Appertons, quite contented with having heard this candid and satisfactory eulogium upon the invalid in the little coach, and not feeling particulary disposed to hear more of the details of his illness or his virtues, made way on the *trottoir* for the persons who were descanting on them. The servant carried a dressing-case, and a pistol-case, and a carpet-bag; one of the boatmen carried a huge Indian basket full of linen, and another bag; and the other boatman a trunk, which appeared almost too heavy for his strength, to which was affixed a card, whereon was written the name of its proper owner.

Apperton, whose curiosity was very easily excited, stepped in advance of his wife two or three paces, and then turning to her with an expression of the most rapturous delight at having discovered what, in point of fact, did not appear likely to be the least interesting to him or her, said, "I have found out the name of the important personage."

"Have you?" said Kate, still looking towards the lessening

ship which was ploughing the waves; "and is he a prince in disguise?"

"No," said Apperton; "a plain officer in the army—'Captain Somerford,' of some regiment, I forget the number, 'passenger' is what is on the card."

"Somerford!" said Kate; not daring to take her eyes from the ship, which, if it before attracted her attention, had now become a thousand times more interesting—"Somerford! —good God—how very strange." These were the only words that escaped her lips, but she felt at the moment as if she were *petrified*: no effort—no exertion could move her from the spot on which she stood. She grasped the coping of the wall to save herself from sinking on the pavement—to have stirred would have been to fall.

"Come Kate, let us walk down once again," said Apperton, on the principle of having his two-pennyworth of promenade for his twopence.

Her head grew dizzy: the dread of tears, which would have relieved her—the impossiblity of answering Apperton—the consciousness that the mere effort to speak would betray her—all overwhelmed her—she stood and trembled, and gasped for breath—to have seen, perhaps to have been seen by Somerford —the only being on earth she loved—as the bride of Apperton—to confess she knew him—to acknowledge even the name, which, during all her husband's intimacy with her family, he had never heard mentioned—how to account for her trepidation, if asked about it—could she deceive so early the man she had married, and on such a point?

It was impossible her agitation should escape the notice even of Apperton, not ordinarily the most sensitive or quick-sighted person, especially where ladies were concerned.

"Are you ill, Kate?" said he.

"Yes," replied Kate; "a sudden giddiness and sickness—I—"

"'Tis the sea," said the unsuspecting husband: "the glare, and the noise, and perhaps the sight of the sick man;—you'll be better presently—try to walk a little."

Kate was thankful for the considerate choice of causes which Apperton had named, whence to select the origin of her malady, and admitted that she thought it *was* the glare of the sun upon the water, and that she *should* be better if they walked towards the Steyne, or the parade, away from its influence; she, the good, the excellent, the amiable, high-principled Kate, not losing sight, in this proposition, of the pro-

bability of again seeing the vehicle which bore C Somerford, and of ascertaining, perhaps, in what direct was going.

In this desire there mingled no feeling of which a could disapprove; it was a solicitude for one who had dearer to her than herself; the knowledge that he wa her, alive too, after the positive reports she had received death, revived ten thousand feelings in her heart, whi had promised herself never again should agitate her; y that she was married—that the hope of ever being Ch was at an end, she felt that she should be happier if she all the particulars of his illness and his recovery—the where he dwelt, and the care under which he was placed felt, in short, the affection of a sister for him, and o gretted that the long concealment of his name had rend impossible to admit her intimate knowledge of him to h band, without subjecting herself to a chain of endless ries, which, if she candidly replied to them, would unset mind of her husband, and perhaps entail upon herself an father a charge of concealment and duplicity.

In the midst, however, of such a conflict of feeling, i easily be imagined that Kate did not find herself very soothed or tranquillized by perceiving that the house to the boatman had recommended Somerford, as his resi adjoined that which she and her husband occupied; an the fly, relieved of its precious burden, was actually sta at the door, while its late inhabitant examined the apart and decided whether he should take them or not.

Among all the combinations which appeared in progr the discomfiture of Kate, and the derangement of the ness of the honeymoon, this seemed the climax. S Somerford was like an electric shock, but she had rec from its startling effect; lodging him next door, with Brighton wall between them, was like putting on a per blister—(she thought technically)—and she felt that wh father and brother joined them, it would be quite im ble to remain such near neighbours without a *denouément*, especially as the houses they inhabited were graced wi once fashionable Brighton bay windows, which on eithe commanded a view of a great portion of the adjoining ing-rooms.

"By Job!" said Apperton—who always so called the m king of the gods; "but I say, Kate, the nabob's gone door to us."

"So I see," said Kate.

"Shows ours is a fashionable part of the town; the grandees come among us," said the stockbroker.

The idea of the poor exiled Somerford being thus suddenly metamorphosed into a grandee, almost made the bride smile.

"I suspect he is too unwell to have much choice left him," said she; "it is rather the taste of the boatman who brought him ashore, than his own, which has been consulted."

"May be so," said Apperton, and the conversation dropped. They continued their walk along the cliff, to what is now the most fashionable part of Brighton, but which had scarcely grown so decidedly elegant five years since. Every thing amazed and surprised Apperton, to whom every thing out of the city was new and curious; but still he recurred every now and then to the sad state of things in London, and his sorrow that he had been obliged to leave it just as he did.

To Kate there appeared a strangeness in her change of situation which she could hardly account for. There she was, the wife of Apperton, and, as far as his manners and conversation went, she might have been his wife for half a dozen years before. The ceremony, the journey, all the concomitant events, had occurred rather as if they were matters of course than the indications of a total change of character and station; and the metamorphosis had been effected so tranquilly and so philosophically, that her marriage seemed more like a dream than a reality.

The extraordinary coincidence of the arrival of Somerford, and the extremely inconvenient position which he had taken up, occupied much of her thoughts during the walk; all the painful regrets of losing him, and the melancholy pleasure of finding him still alive, gave way for the moment to the embarrassment which his vicinity to them caused. It made no very great difference while Apperton and she were alone there, because Somerford did not know the name of Apperton, and Apperton was equally unacquainted with that of Somerford; but when her father and brother and Moss arrived, the secret must inevitably out.

It was true, she was now the wife of another; and therefore her father could have no great cause for exhibiting an asperity of feeling towards Charles, which the idea of a marriage between him and Kate had formerly excited; but it seemed equally probable to Mrs. Apperton, that Somerford, now he had grown to "man's estate," had obtained promotion in the

army, and had run, as it appeared, a course of popular
India, would feel his situation extremely different from
in which he found himself at the time of his departure ; an
considered that although indebted for his first start in li
her father, he might not be disposed, after the cavalier t
ment he had subsequently received at his hands, to meet hi
cordially as might have been wished : at all events, their j
position was a subject of incessant torment to her, an
was only divided in her mind, between at once confidin
whole story to Apperton, or waiting till the arrival of the
wells to develope the mystery connected with their n
neighbour.

It did not appear, however, very improbable that her
might receive the intelligence, not only of Somerford's s
in England, but of his actual domestication at Brighton,
before Kate could have an opportunity of confiding
thoughts and feelings to the old gentleman ; for Maxwell
naturally be among the first persons to whom Some
would write, seeing that now his mother was dead the sur
was almost the only person likely to feel any interest i
affairs.

The day closed—as even the saddest day will ; and
the stillness of evening, unbroken by the dashing of th
along the shore—for it was calm—had, as it were, set it
while Apperton, brisk bridegroom as he was, was ya
and looking first at his watch and then at his wife, Kate
not stop her ears to the sound of voices, which, thanks t
thinness of Brighton walls, were perfectly audible from the
ing-room of the adjoining house. The bell was heard—
she forget that it was rung by Somerford's hand ? In th
of a servant, she distinctly recognised his voice ; nay, she
heard his well-known laugh in reply to some observation, w
like the rest of the conversation carried on, was, thoug
fectly audible, quite indistinct.

" How plainly we hear those people in the next house,'
Apperton ; "we must take care and say nothing very loud
that we don't want to be known all over the neigh
hood."

" One only hears a sort of murmuring noise," said
" there is no distinguishing the words of a conversation.

" I suppose," said her husband, " it is that rich chap i
fly, talking over his perils and escapes on the voyage. I
he lodged in this house ; we'd have asked him to tell us hi

tory, just to pass away time; for I must say, Brighton *does* appear to me rather a dullish place, taken altogether."

"To you," said Kate, "accustomed to the constant bustle of business, it must appear so; but I should think a little relaxation will be serviceable to you. I know my father is never so well as here, when he can get time to run down for a few days;—but then, to be sure, his pursuits are different from yours."

"Why, so they are," said Apperton, "or rather were; for I believe I have bitten the old gentleman with the speculating mania; his mind is now almost as much occupied with city work as my own: and he will have cause to thank me for what I have done for him. Money, says some book that I once read, is like manure—stuck of a heap it has a nominal value, and there an end—but scatter it, distribute it, spread it, and it not only retains its own value, but creates new sources of profit by the general fructification of the surrounding land."

"What, has my father been speculating, as you call it?" said Kate.

"He has made a good use of his money, under my direction," said Apperton. "If one thing happens, which cannot well fail of happening, he will, by this day three months, be worth a couple of hundred thousand pounds, Kitty."

"And if it should *not* happen?" asked Kate.

"It *must* happen," replied the stockbroker.

"Well, then my father ought already to congratulate himself upon the vast addition you have enabled him to make to his fortune," said Mrs. Apperton.

"Why, not exactly *that*," said Apperton; "there *are* slips between the cup and the lip; and it is just possible, and that's all—that we may be beaten."

"And in *that* case," said Katherine.

"Why, in that case," said her husband, "it will be time enough to consider what more can be done."

Short as was this conversation, and this the first too which she had ever had with Apperton upon the subject—it was of a nature to alarm and agitate her. She had heard, in common conversation, numerous remarks upon the enormous profits probably derivable from certain speculations, and she had seen Apperton exhibit with triumph, sundry little square bits of paper, which he said were shares in this company and bonds of that loan; and she had never paid any great attention to the discussion: but now, from her husband's manner, and his restless desire to see her father, and his nervous anxiety about

what was doing in the city, she began to fear that with her parent, Apperton had been more successful in extolling these securities; and, although she, of course, was ill calculated for a judge in such matters, the exercise of her common sense induced her to look with doubt and trembling to any thing *like* an exchange of the savings of a long and active professional life for a few bits of paper, conferring on the holder the privileges and profits of a proprietor in, perhaps, an extensive range of oxygen mines in the westernmost part of the kingdom of Utopia.

It is true, Kate had latterly remarked a change in her father's manner; he seemed to take less interest in the little amusements of his home than he formerly had done, and even the greater objects of his life were less assiduously attended to; but the alteration did not either alarm or grieve her, since she saw with it no alteration in his health or spirits; on the contrary, he appeared more lively than she had remembered him for some years.

The secret, whatever it was, of which she had acci*dentally* become possessed, had evidently preyed upon his mind at an earlier part of the season, and he never recurred to it, however slightly, without a sort of shuddering which it was most painful for Kate to see excited; but even the effects of *that* seemed to have vanished, and from different allusions made during his conversations with Apperton, she felt convinced that some new direction had been given to his energies—some new excitement offered to his feelings; and after the brief remarks of her husband upon the present occasion, she assured herself that he was more deeply interested in the schemes of his son-in-law, than, until this very evening, she had any idea of.

Shortly after this dialogue, the happy Apperton proposed retiring to rest; and, as if more pointedly and especially to harass and torment poor Kitty, precisely at the same hour did Captain Charles Somerford, next door, ring *his* bell, call *his* servant, and repair to his chamber for the night.

While Katherine, with the assistance of her maid, was disrobing, she could hear Charles giving directions to his servant, who was in the dressing-room beyond, in a tone of voice which augured well for his lungs, whatever might have happened to his liver, to have breakfast by ten; that Mrs. Mackirkincroft and Mr. Macleod were coming to partake of that meal, and to have whitings, and prawns, and a variety of other things ready, nothing of which in itself sounded particularly sentimental, but it recalled years of time gone by; it awakened ten thousand

agonizing feelings, not unmixed with a little worldly kindness, which made her grateful to Providence that one for whom she had cared so much, was, after all the accounts she had heard of his death, well enough to make such things as prawns, whitings, and Mackirkincrofts, objects of his care and solicitude.

"That's the gentleman just come from Hingy we hear so plain in the next house there," said Mrs. Alsop.

"We *do* hear very plainly, in these rooms, I think," said Kate.

"*He's* an uncommon nice gentleman, ma'am," said Mrs. Alsop; "his man was telling our William that he was not really ill, but weaklike, and got a cold on his lungs, and so they brought him up in a fly; but he is quite young, and, from what I could see of him, uncommon good-looking."

"You seem to have made yourself pretty well acquainted with the people next door, I think," said Mrs. Apperton, "considering the shortness of the time we and they have been here."

"Why you see, ma'am," said Alsop, "both these houses belong to the same missis; so there's a door between 'em in the kitchens, and then, here it an't like London; all the doors open on the latch, and one runs up one area steps and down the other, and sometimes they come and borrow a light, or a drop of hot water from *us*, and sometimes I pop in, if we havn't a good fire in our room, and warm myself at theirs, so that its more like one house than two; so we know one another very soon in such places as these."

If any thing could have added to Kate's embarrassment, it was this ingenuous statement of Mrs. Alsop's; whence she discovered that, in point of fact, she and her rejected, yet fondly loved Somerford, were actually living under the same roof; and that however the name of Apperton might deceive him for a day or two, her *own* Charles must, in a short time, know the fact. Her concealment from her husband of the knowledge she had gained of his rival's proximity, although it appeared to her something like duplicity, was not of a very heinous nature, and she most assuredly would have been satisfied to continue it, but that, as I have said before, she foresaw the arrival of her father and brother must inevitably put an end to the delusion. To deny *then* that she knew who their neighbour was, would be a falsehood to which she could not stoop, more especially after the communication made by Alsop; while, on the other hand, she saw nothing but confusion, unsettling of minds,

exciting doubts, and even jealousies, by confessing the whole story to her husband, who would naturally think the very worst of her former attachment to Somerford, from never having heard his name mentioned, or the slightest recurrence ever made to the circumstance, in a family proverbially open and ingenuous, and who boasted that they had no secrets from each other, always excepting professional ones.

In a temper of mind likely to be excited by these circumstances, superadded to a belief that Apperton had induced her father to hazard much more than he ought to have risked in the pursuit of speculations, the nature of which it was impossible he should comprehend, Mrs. Katherine Apperton betook herself to her rest; and when she laid her head on her pillow to await her husband's approach, she discovered, by the sound of a slight cough with which Captain Charles Somerford appeared still to be afflicted, that her head was distant from *his*, about one inch more than the thickness of the wall which separated the houses.

In the midst of this combination of difficulties, Mrs. *Alsop* quitted her mistress for the evening: of course we must in delicacy do the same; and if the reader please, with the same amiable ceremony, of wishing her "a very good night."

Whatever might be the state of affairs at Brighton, the atmosphere of Burlington Gardens was none of the clearest; the family, unsettled and broken up, seemed divided into little factions, and on the very day when Somerford took up his abode close to the Appertons at Brighton, Moss, having despatched his brother to the fens, dined away from Maxwell's by choice. Maxwell, the elder, had throughout the day displayed a degree of irritability very unusual with him, and evinced agitation and low spirits by turns. Any thing likely to disturb the perfect comfort and serenity of his evening, Godfrey Moss could not by any means endure; and he therefore accepted some invitation, or perhaps made one for himself, with a friend, which would carry him out of the influence of what he considered the surgeon's temporary ill-temper.

This, while it was extremely agreeable to Moss, was not less convenient to Edward, who, as it may easily be imagined, was particularly anxious to conclude the very interesting conversation which he had commenced with his father the previous evening, and which had so nearly arrived at its crisis, when it was interrupted. The elder Maxwell, however, had throughout the day shown symptoms of ill-humour, which Edward feared might perhaps prevent the termination of his eulogy

upon the unknown beauty, and his confession of having seen his respected parent enjoying a *tête-à-tête* with her.

But he was disappointed, and disappointed in a manner which surprised and astounded him. No sooner were the servants withdrawn, and he was left with his father, than the old gentleman opened the subject himself.

"Edward," said Maxwell, "I have always thought, and not unfrequently said, that the romance of real life is more filled with extraordinary events, than the mind of the poet or the fabulous historian would imagine. Your beautiful vision is discovered to me, and by the merest accident."

"You know her then, sir?" said Edward.

"I do," said the surgeon; "and only this day, during all my acquaintance with her, did she mention the circumstance of your having preserved her life; for the strongest of all possible reasons; until yesterday, she was not aware that we were connected, or even acquainted with each other."

"She recognised me at church then I presume?" said Edward.

"Precisely so."

"Whither she had gone——?"

"—— at her own request, and by my permission, to witness the ceremony that made my daughter——"

"—— the wife of Apperton," said Edward, who saw that his father was rather at a loss to finish the sentence. "But how," continued he, "how came you acquainted with her; and how should *she* be interested in what concerns my sister?"

"One who is warmly attached to *me*," said Maxwell, "cannot surely be indifferent to those who are so dear to me as Katherine is."

"Attached, sir," said Edward.

"Yes, attached," replied Maxwell.

"And who is she?" asked Edward.

"That, my son," answered the surgeon, "you must never know."

"Never, sir!" exclaimed Edward.

"Never," repeated Maxwell: "circumstances render it imperative on me to conceal her name, her prospects, her rank and station from *you*; a further connexion with her would be destruction to us all. Shame and ignominy would fall upon you, and eternal ruin upon me."

"What, is she guilty then?" said Edward, "and have I ——"

"As pure as heaven's own spirits," said Maxwell; "exem-

plary in every relation of life, affectionate, kind, accomplished, amiable, and virtuous."

"And yet," said Edward, "danger and ignominy would follow a connexion with her."

"I have said it," said Maxwell; "and you know, *Ned, I* seldom speak hastily or even lightly."

"Is she yet unmarried?" said Edward.

"She is," replied his father.

"Where are her friends?" said Edward;—"in pity tell me that."

"Never, never!" said Maxwell. "Nay, you must promise me never again to recur to the subject, never to mention her more."

"I have seen you with her in the open day," said Edward; "there can be nothing disgraceful in such an association, or you, with your high character, and placed in a situation of such delicacy as yours, would not have thus exposed yourself to the public eye in her society."

"You saw me with her," said Maxwell; "when—*where*?"

"Some few days since, in the Green Park," said Edward.

"You knew then of *my* acquaintance with her," said Maxwell; "tell me by what means—tell me, I entreat, I implore, I insist—by what means could you have discovered that I knew her?"

"By the simplest of all means," said Edward—"I saw you with her."

"Accidentally?" said Maxwell, earnestly.

"Of course, sir," said Edward; "I had no clue to her, or I should have used it long before."

"And did you follow us?" said Maxwell.

"No, sir," said his son, "I did not," with an air of something which was meant for dignity, and to convey to his father a magnificent idea of high feeling, and being "very much above doing such a thing" as watch his parent under such circumstances; when, in fact, he knew he could not keep them in view without being discovered himself.

"How comes it, that you did not mention this before?" said Maxwell.

"I have had no opportunity," said Edward. "I assure you it has preyed heavily on my spirits; when I beheld her again in church yesterday morning, I resolved not to sleep until I had come to an understanding with you on the subject; and, as you know, I had actually begun a conversation yesterday evening, when Moss and his brother came back from the play."

"She tells me," said Maxwell, "that her surprise when she beheld *you* present, as part of Kate's family, was unbounded; and, as we agreed to-day, the combination of circumstances which have jumbled us all together, is so far beyond the belief of commonplace people, that, if it were written in a book, the reader would call it, if not impossible, too improbable to appear the least natural."

"And what *is* that combination, sir?" said Edward.

"Ned," said Maxwell, "it would be a happy day for me when I could explain the whole of the circumstances to you; at present, I have only to enforce upon you the obligation of silence. You have seen Maria—"

"Maria!—her name is Maria, then," said Edward; feeling that he had gained something, even by knowing so much more of her than he did before.

"Yes, yes," said Maxwell, looking foolish at having even gone the harmless length of letting slip the Christian name of the mysterious being who seemed to influence them all. "Maria; or, if it be not, it will serve as well as any other to think *of her* by; for I again repeat, that even her Christian name must never be mentioned."

"But am I then forbidden, if I see her accidentally, from speaking to her?" said Edward; "may I not, now that she knows my name and station, and, above all, knows that I have the recommendation of being your son, may I not prefer my suit?"

"Your suit!" said Maxwell; "call it your destruction, Ned. So long as the feelings and prejudices of society exist, a marriage with such a person, even in an ordinary case, would be ruinous; but in hers, one single step farther in your acquaintance plunges us all into ruin and destruction."

"All!" said Edward; "tell me that *I* alone shall sacrifice every hope, every prospect, but that of obtaining her, I'll risk the last."

"Ruin would overwhelm us *all*," said Maxwell; "believe me, if the case were not urgent, imperative, vital, I would not press this upon your mind; but I repeat, for the last time that I shall ever speak upon the subject, farther connexion with that young woman would be destruction to us all."

"Answer me, father, as you claim my duty," said Edward, "is she, herself,—whatever may be the mystery that hangs over her—free from stain and guilt?"

"I have already told you, Edward," said Maxwell, "that

she is excellent and exemplary, in every relation of life; but *you* must never see her more."

"Oh, father, father! what have I done to deserve this dreadful sentence?" exclaimed Edward.

"There is no fault on either side," said Maxwell; "*you* have been miraculously thrown together, who ought, of all other human beings, never to have met; and I would to heaven that I had checked her desire to see Kate's wedding, for if she had not been present at that ceremony, we should have lived, and perhaps died, in ignorance of the real state of the case."

"No," said Edward, "after I had seen *you* with her, watched her anxiety until you came, her ease and happiness when you arrived, mingled with her watchfulness of discovery, I could not have suffered the subject to rest until I had ascertained the fact."

"You have ascertained no particular fact now," said Maxwell; "nor will you ever ascertain more. I regret the circumstances bitterly, but there must be an end of it."

"But, tell me, sir, what affairs, what business, *could* take this young lady on board a ship called the Wilhelmina, outward bound, commanded by a Captain Randolph."

"What!" cried, or rather screamed, the elder Maxwell, with a look so full of ghastly terror, that Edward trembled like a leaf to see his sire so moved. "What ship! what captain! what are you talking of, sir?"

"I mean, sir," said Edward, absolutely shaking with alarm at the unusual agitation of his father, "that in my pursuit of this young lady, I traced her to a ship so called, and so commanded. She stayed on board some time; but I lost her eventually, by her landing on the opposite bank of the river to that on which I had posted myself."

"The ship you spoke of has sailed," said Maxwell, coldly and sullenly.

"I know she has sailed from the river," answered Edward; "for she sailed that very night, and spoiled my errand when I went to look for her the next morning."

"Have no more such errands, Ned," said Maxwell; "the ship has nothing to do with Maria, nor Maria with the ship; but if she had, I should charge you upon your duty to stir no farther in the pursuit, which, as I have said before, and now repeat, could only end in ruin to yourself, and destruction to your family."

"In all things, sir," said Edward, "that you command, I solemnly promise to obey you; but if I should accidentally

see her, I cannot promise so rigidly to keep my faith as not to speak to her."

"You may speak to her as you please," said Maxwell, "whenever you see her again. I only bind you to silence on the subject here: as to any other part of your conduct, I lay no restriction upon it. I have put to you the danger and disgrace of a connexion with her, forcibly and powerfully. I believed you when you pledged yourself to obey me; but before I put you to the test—she was so disposed of, that even if you broke your faith with your father, you could have *gained nothing* from your mistress—YOU NEVER WILL—YOU NEVER CAN, SEE HER AGAIN."

After the conversation had reached this point, a calm suddenly succeeded. Edward, unable to endure what appeared to him the refinement of all earthly cruelty, rushed to his room; and his father, after congratulating himself upon the extraordinary discovery he had that day made, and the decisive measures he had adopted to put an end to the affair, drank two or three glasses of wine hastily, and afterward fell into a train of thinking which would not bear disclosure, but which pained and agitated him beyond description. From his reflections he was aroused by Moss, on his return from his early dinner, whose only observation before he ordered his customary gin and water was, that Maxwell was a wise man to snooze by his own fireside on such a miserable night, and that it was lucky he had no company; for if he had, he would have thought it necessary, for the show of the thing, to have been "sent for" in a hurry, and have gone through the ceremony of driving three or four miles to some poor cretur of a patient who did not expect him, in order to exhibit to his guests the great extent of his practice, and the constant desire that there was for his services.

Edward did not reappear during the evening, and Moss and Maxwell had a long *tête-à-tête* to themselves; but it was observable that although the surgeon conversed with his companion upon every topic connected with the family, of the most secret and delicate nature imaginable, he never let fall one single syllable relative to Maria, the history and mystery of the good ship Wilhelmina, or her respectable master, Captain Randolph, of the Grange road, Bermondsey.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Now, in this dear embrace I lose the toils
Of ten years' war; absence with all his pains
Is by this charming moment wiped away.
All bounteous gods, sure never was a heart
So full, so blest as mine."

THOMSON.

THE reader will perceive that the Maxwell family is getting into difficulties, and difficulties of a rather complicated nature; which, while they affect particularly every individual connected with it, seem to press upon it generally; and I am afraid, if I am thoroughly candid, that I must prognosticate, as *people* do regarding ladies under particular circumstances, that they *must* be worse before they are better.

It is odd enough, that the *dénouément* of Maria's story, and the unexpected arrival of Somerford, should have excited in the breast of Edward a feeling of resentment against his father's present needless cruelty, and revived in the bosom of Katherine all the sorrows she had felt, when, upon a former occasion, he had acted in a similar manner towards herself. The surgeon's family practice was certainly none of the tenderest; a decisive *cut* seemed the principle of action; immediate separation, without the ceremony of parting, appeared to be his universal panacea; and as he had ten years before carried off Charles Somerford, and embarked him in the Honourable Company's ship Mulligatawny, to put an end to his acquaintance with his daughter, so it appeared to his son, he had in this case, actually kidnapped the delicate Maria, and transported her for life on board the Wilhelmina, Captain Randolph, in order to conclude the connexion between her and his son.

The ardent lover, however, nothing daunted by the *veto* of his father, and confiding somewhat in the leniency which the old gentleman exhibited in the case of Miss Epsworth's defection, resolved that if the Wilhelmina was yet at any of the outports, thither would he transport himself; and if it were true that under any circumstances the lovely girl had been induced or compelled to quit England, or if her business or pleasure,

whichever it might be, actually led her to abandon the shores of what he concluded to be her native country, equally true should it be found that he had accompanied her—aye, to the farthest verge of the world;—such is the force of first impressions, such the power of woman!

Full of this determination, Edward directed his servant to prepare a portmanteau for a journey; in what direction he should go would be determined by the intelligence he might during the following day acquire; and having selected all the valuable articles of which he was possessed, in the way of *snuff*-boxes, chains, rings, and other personals, he reckoned up his stock of cash in hand, and found himself master of some seventy pounds, amounting to nearly a quarter part of the annual allowance his father had made him; which—since candour upon all family matters is absolutely necessary—amounted to four hundred pounds per annum, exclusive of all tradesmen's bills, which the old gentleman annually paid, and the free quarters (or what in Ireland is called the "run of his *teeth*,") which were open to himself and any of his acquaintance in his father's house.

In the morning, when he arose and saw his trunk filled for the expedition, and reflected moreover that he was about to take a step which would indubitably separate his father and himself for ever, he felt, for the first time, doubtful whether he should pursue the bright vision any farther. He had been told by his parent that ruin and disgrace would be the consequences of any connexion with the young lady; he had himself seen her accosted by people of most suspicious appearance, and as he afterward discovered, not of the most respectable profession; there was also a degree of trickery in her escape from his pursuit at the Golden Cross, which could only have been carried into effect by a person intimately acquainted with the *locale* of a London stable-yard; all this he admitted to himself, and admitted, that even their first interview took place in a part of the metropolis where it was extremely improbable a young lady of any very great respectability would have been found, unaccompanied by a protector, and unattended by a servant; but even these reflections, however much for the moment they might damp, could not extinguish the desire he felt to prosecute the search after her; for although what he had collected in his mind to serve as reasons for not pursuing her, was plausible and rational enough, still, if her associates at one period were disreputable, his father had himself been her companion at another; his father, too, who,

even *now*, declared that she was virtuous and exemplary in all the relations of life, and yet that she must infallibly entail disgrace and ruin upon them all, if she became connected with them.

The fact of her being alone when he first saw her, which always weighed upon his mind, and which, as a feature of the case, was always open to the satire of Moss, he was inclined to lay less stress upon, than many other people might have done; for he was aware, mixing as he did pretty generally with society, that the wives, nay, the unmarried daughters of highly respectable people, are permitted by their parents and connexions to go shopping, or calling on friends, or visiting bazaars, or benefiting their health, without any servant or attendant. It is true, that such laxity produces in many instances promiscuous flirtations in the streets; sometimes assignation in the park, and occasionally perhaps worse consequences; but habit and custom reconcile the strangest incongruities, and the wealthy tradesman, or even the professional man of *moderate* pretensions, sees neither fear nor danger in sending *his* daughters (or even one, which is for various reasons a thousand times worse,) adrift upon the *pavé*; and if they return, as they almost invariably do, safe home in time to dress for dinner, the adventures in which they may have been engaged during the morning's stroll, never being suspected by their parents, are never inquired after; and the young ladies proceed upon another healthful excursion the next day, provided the weather be fine, and the streets dry. The thing that chiefly mystified Edward was the connexion which somehow existed between this dangerous delightful creature and his family; for having perfect faith in his father's assurances of her goodness and propriety, backed, as they were, by the fact of his having publicly walked with her in the streets of London, in the open glare of day, it was quite clear, from the interest he took in her, and from the fact of her having been present at his sister's wedding, that she must be somehow most interestingly mixed up with all their proceedings.

He once glanced at the possibility that she might be the daughter of his father, and not of his mother—but the high character which it was essentially necessary his respected parent, in *his* profession, should maintain, put that supposition quite out of the question; so, after debating, and worrying, and torturing himself for a considerable length of time, he came back to his first resolution of searching for her; it appearing to him absolutely necessary to his peace and comfort,

putting the love and romance out of the question, to ascertain who she actually was.

Having therefore made his disposition above-stairs, and made up his mind to another visit to Bermondsey after breakfast, to ascertain from his fair friend with the cockatoos where the good ship Wilhelmina actually was, and when she was positively to sail, the young gentleman proceeded to the breakfast-parlour, where he found his father in a state of any thing but placidity.

Before him, on the table, lay the newspaper, announcing a second great failure in the city—a letter from Apperton, entreating him to come off forthwith to Brighton—and a list of shares, exhibiting a most tremendous fall in one of the joint stock companies, in which Apperton was principally embarked, and in which it seemed but too probable he had committed the surgeon.

"We must go to Brighton to-day, Ned," said Maxwell.

"Brighton!" exclaimed Edward; "is any one ill?"

"Ill at ease, Apperton appears," replied Maxwell; "he wants to see me, and he cannot leave Kate—so we will be off after breakfast. I must write some few letters of apology to some patients and—I must return to town in three or four days—but it is best to go."

"I am afraid," said Edward, "I shall not be able to go so soon as to day—I——"

"Law business, I presume, keeps you," said his father sneeringly.

"No," replied Edward; but I have some engagements which——"

"—— you must put off, as I shall put off mine," said Maxwell.

"I will endeavour to do so," said Edward, taking up the newspaper, and glancing his eyes in all directions to discover the "ship news," where he anticipated some intelligence might be found about the Wilhelmina, on board of which he had made up his mind his fair friend was actually stowed.

"Have you seen Moss?" said Maxwell.

"No, sir," replied Edward.

"I suppose we must take him with us, or Kitty will be quite disappointed," said Maxwell.

"A short honeymoon seclusion Apperton makes of it," said Edward smiling.

"Honey," said Maxwell, with an expression of countenance indicative of his knowledge that Apperton's happiness

must be in no small degree deteriorated by the events which were going on in the city.

"By heavens! see this," exclaimed Ned; "did you read the ship news, sir?"

"Not I," said Maxwell; "ship news does not interest me, —what is it?"

"Listen," said Edward, and read as follows:—"Brighton—yesterday morning, the Hon. Company's ship Lady Simkins was off this place, where she landed her purser, who set off immediately for London with the letters and despatches. She also landed some passengers, and, after remaining in sight upwards of three hours, proceeded on her way to the river."

"Prodigiously interesting, upon my word," said Maxwell; "if Lady Simpkins herself, who is some slop-selling director's wife, I suppose, had been there instead of her cumbrous name-sake, I should have been quite as much edified."

"Nay, but the point, sir," said Edward; "you havn't come to the point."

"Well," said his father, "pray go on then; let's hear the point."

"Names of passengers landed," said Edward:—"The Hon. Alexander Snob Macleod, Secretary to Government in the Twanky-twaddle department of the twenty-four Pergunnahs; Mrs. Mackirkincroft, wife of his Excellency Hildebrand Hogg Mackirkincroft, Governor of Palamabog, and five children."

"Well," interrupted Maxwell, "any more of them?"

"Yes, one," said Edward, "Captain Charles Somerford, of H. M. forces, from the Cape of Good Hope."

"Somerford home!" exclaimed Maxwell; "why he has been dead these six months."

"Then he has come to life again," said Edward; "for here he is in black and white."

"And at Brighton, too," said Maxwell; "I suppose merely for a few hours. I shall, no doubt, hear from him,—Somerford—good heavens! how strange!"

And hereabouts the old gentleman fell into a sort of revery, from which he presently awoke.

"Why, then, all the reports of his death at the Cape must have been false."

To this remark, the very natural result of a conclusion to which the elder Maxwell had rationally enough come, upon finding the young object of his former interest, hopes, and suspicions, alive and merry, Edward did not pay quite so much attention as filial duty might justly have exacted; and

perhaps the reader may already guess why; it was no neglect of proper respect, nor, indeed, was it from any want of interest in a matter which he knew could not fail very deeply to interest his sister, but it was because, under the same head of "*Ship News*," which he mechanically read to its end, he saw the words which follow:—"Portsmouth—sailed the Hero, Smith, for Boston, and the Wilhelmina, Randolph, for Bombay."

The last words fixed his eyes and riveted his attention; all his speculations about Maria as connected with that vessel were at a glance overturned. The ship to which he fancied her *conveyed had* sailed two days before, and she had been in his father's society only yesterday.

This new mystification, however, had one good effect, it rendered needless his fly-away trip to the outports; and, moreover, made his journey to Brighton less objectionable. He resolved, however, to take no notice of the event to his father; and almost consoled himself with the belief that the declaration made by the old gentleman on the preceding evening, that he never should, and never *could* see Maria more, amounted to little else than one of the finely rounded periods with which it is considered good taste, by an angry parent, to conclude an interesting conversation with a refractory child.

"I wonder if Kate will see Somerford," said Maxwell, reverting to the curious coincidence of his arrival; "had she heard of his death, do you know, Ned?"

Edward, who at the moment being a good deal involved in his own affairs, forgot exactly whether it had been agreed between Kate and himself to deny or admit this knowledge, hesitated for a moment in his answer; but as he really *was* puzzled, he resolved to make a merit of necessity, and try the truth, as having at all events as good a chance as any thing else; and he admitted that she had.

"Then," said Maxwell, "the surprise will be the more striking, if they meet; and as Apperton has most assuredly never heard Somerford's name mentioned, it will altogether appear very extraordinary to him; but, God knows, he has enough to think of just now, besides little punctilios or delicacies, in which, at the best of times, he is no very scientific person."

"It is strange," said Edward, making a plunge at a novel reflection, "how readily people repeat and disseminate falsehoods. I shall be very glad to see Somerford again."

"I have no objection to see and receive him as usual," said Maxwell. "I should have strong objections to him as a connexion, *although I believe*, in every moral point of view, the

young man is unexceptionable; he seems to have been successful in promotion, and yet purchase with him must be out of the question."

"I suppose the old oriental wish of bloody wars and sickly seasons has been realized in his case," said Edward.

"And so, then, Master Ned," said Maxwell, in a tone half-playful and half solicitous, "you are made the depository of Kate's secrets."

"Of all, I verily believe," said Edward, "I don't think she ever conceals any thing she knows from me; although I must admit that her confidence has only latterly been so implicitly extended to me."

"What, Edward!" said his father, fixing his eyes steadily on his son, "does she confide *all* that is confided to her to you?"

"All, sir," said young Maxwell, "with one exception—the secret she discovered when she went unadvisedly into your room; upon that I have tried her again and again, tempted her with secrets of my own, frightened her, threatened her, but all to no purpose; whatever it was she saw upon that occasion I know not, but she is there immoveably close."

"She is a good girl, and I was right in my opinion of her," said Maxwell; "the secret, abstractedly, is about as important as that of freemasonry; but since she was entrusted with it, as the test of her sincerity, it has become no doubt her pride as well as her duty, to keep it as inviolably."

"Why I must do her more justice than that," said Edward; "for by the way she alludes to the subject, it should seem that the secret *is* something more than a test, especially as it was one she accidentally discovered, and which was certainly not offered to her."

"Let me hear no more about it, Edward," said Maxwell. "Kate rashly intruded, and saw what she most certainly should not have seen; but as I have interdicted the subject, I trust you will abstain from bringing it to her recollection as rigidly as she refuses to satisfy your curiosity."

"Well sir, I cry a bargain," said Edward, "and here it is: tell me some little more of Maria, and the other story never shall be thought of by me; tell me what it is you mean by saying that I never shall, and never can, see her more?"

"What I have said is the truth," answered Maxwell; "she is beyond your reach, beyond your ken—and I repeat, you never can behold her again."

"Then she has *not* sailed in the Wilhelmina?" said Edward.

"*I* never said she had sailed in any ship," replied Maxwell; you started the story about a ship, and told *me* you had traced her: I know nothing of that part of her history; but to save you all farther anxiety, I repeat to you, upon the honour of a gentleman, that neither will *you* ever see her again, nor to the best of my belief shall I."

"This is a most perplexing, most provoking mystery," said Edward.

"Oh, come none o' your mysteries, Master Neddums," said Moss, entering the room in a pace something between hobbling and rolling. "Let's have the muffins now, and leave the mystery till after breakfast."

"What d'ye think, Moss?" said the elder Maxwell.

"Of nothing but breakfast," said Moss.

"Charles Somerford is returned alive and merry, as far as I know," said Maxwell.

"Well, I'm glad o' that too, poor boy," said Moss; "I wish he had been here a month sooner."

"But where do you think he *is*?" said Edward.

"How should I know?" said Moss. "Have you rung for the muffins?"

"At Brighton at this very minute," exclaimed the elder Maxwell.

"Better and better," cried Moss.

"Where, please God, we shall all be, by this day's dinner-time," said the surgeon.

"What, going to travel?" cried Godfrey, "me and all! Have up the cold meat—let's lay a good foundation, and to-day's as good a day as any other. What is Kittums tired of her husband, or is the stock-brokering cretur tired of her? eh! I knew how long the honeymoon would last."

"It is business which induces me to visit him so early after his marriage," said Maxwell.

"Oh, I dare say," said Moss; "some of the famous air-bubble concerns are going to burst, are they?—some new South Sea affair."

"Never mind what it is," said Maxwell, who repressed Godfrey's energetic denunciation of all the financial quackeries of the day, with something more of earnestness than usual. "Whatever it is, it is to my advantage to see Apperton; and therefore I am sure you will not oppose my going, nor refuse to accompany me."

"Not I, Mack," said Moss: *your* carriage, *your* post-horses, your time, and your convenience—of course; name your hour—(ring again for the muffins, Ned)—and I'll be ready—my wardrobe, as you know, does not take long packing. *And are* you to be of the party, Neddums?"

"Yes," said Maxwell, "he is. The fact is, I could not well go without him; for if Apperton should be obliged to run up to town, there would be nobody to take care of Kate in her walks and excursions, for I am soon tired of such expeditions now."

"Who knows, Ned, but you may find your Long-Acre Venus there, going back every morning to the sea, whence she rose," said Moss.

"For *my* part," said Edward, "I really do not see how I can contrive to get off the engagements I have made; I ——"

"Say to your friends," said Maxwell, "that your father wishes you to accompany him to Brighton; if they are friends worth having, they will not be offended at your obedience to a parent's wishes."

"It was clear that Brighton was the point at which they were all fated to arrive by dinner time. Edward's portmanteau was already packed and prepared, but he little thought when he gave the directions for getting it ready, what its destination was to be. However, as he clearly saw his going was inevitable, he made the best of it; and, as it may be imagined, very easily got rid of a string of engagements, which had, in point of fact, existed only in his own mind.

Matters being thus arranged, and the carriage ordered at one, Edward announced his readiness to attend his father, and was rewarded by the old gentleman with an affectionate shake of the hand. The surgeon proceeded, in his town chariot, to extricate himself from his professional entanglements for two or three days; and at a very few minutes after the appointed time the trio took their departure from the metropolis.

Strange things had been doing during the morning at the place to which they were going, and strange things yet remained to be done; but no matter—we must wait with patience the due developement of events, which, however, the reader may already begin to anticipate.

It would be treason to Mrs. Apperton to dilate much upon the nature of her feelings with regard to Somerford, since it is an unquestionable fact, that she had determined to overcome and conquer them; but it would be wilfully conceal-

ruth, which ought to be told, to pass over in silence the
lful struggle which the conflict cost her.
thousand times during the night did she regret that she
ıot, at once, admitted to Apperton her acquaintance with
les, explained the nature of their connexion and intimacy,
referred to it, as a mere matter for conversation, now that
s had rolled away, and that the change of circumstances
made her the wife of another—but she had not done so:
ıe moment of Apperton's discovery of Somerford's name
ı the trunk, she lost her presence of mind, and gave, by con-
ment, an air of guilt and mystery to an occurrence, which,
ld at once, would have proved only one of thousands of
nces which every day turn up, where young lovers, in
life, are rejected for want of the ostensible means of main-
ıg an establishment, and educating a family. The feel-
under which Kate suffered are not to be described. As
est, she had none; and it must have been clear to her
and, if he had turned his thoughts into that channel, that
lisquietude and evident unhappiness must have had some
serious causes than those to which she had attributed
; namely, fatigue and over-exercise during the day.
e rose from her bed unrefreshed and feverish. When she
eeded to breakfast, she beheld under the windows and
e the door of the adjoining house an absolute cavalcade
nkeys and ponies, covered with Mackirkincrofts, the
er endeavouring to preserve order among the young "na-
;" while the well-powdered Mr. Macleod was making the
ble to her, after the fashion of 1792. At this juncture
ıgain beheld Somerford, who was amusing himself by
ıg the children with pellets of bread, and making himself,
rious ways, as agreeable as possible to his newly arrived
s, who shortly after entered the house and proceeded to
fast, while the younger scions betook themselves on an
rsion to the Downs, for health and exercise.
ıarles Somerford appeared to Kate to have grown since
parted—he was certainly taller, and most certainly much
somer: his features, which were regular and well formed,
ıssumed a more intellectual expression, and the pallid hue
health gave to his intelligent eyes a brightness and power
h were full as fascinating as they ought to have been to
, under the circumstances. His figure altogether was im-
ed, and his manner, and the ease which an association
the world had given him since their separation, had so
ly added to the powerful attractions which he had even be-

fore possessed, that Mrs. Apperton's self reproaches for having consented to abandon the hope of being his were as painful almost as the exercise of that self constraint which *perpetually* reminded her that she was actually—another's.

"Kate, dear," said Apperton, in a voice of kindness *which* sounded as unmusical to her ears as the croaking of a frog, or the drone of a bag pipe, "things look up in the city; my letters this morning speak of more failures; but in *our* affairs —I mean your father's and mine—we are doing prodigiously well, and all our hopes will be realized."

"But they will come to us to-day?" said Kate.

"Oh, I conclude they will," said Apperton; "I begged your father to come, and Ned, I am sure, will not let him come alone."

"And Mr. Godfrey Moss," said Kate, "will not let himself be left alone; so we shall have the whole party."

"I have arranged about the beds, Kate," said Apperton; "there are two rooms in this house for your father and Ned, or Moss, whoever prefers sleeping here, and one bed-*room* the mistress of the house has let me have next door. So there'll be no puddling about at night to a distant sleeping place. I hate that sort of breaking up—it would not suit Mousetrap to have far to puddle; but by this arrangement, for which I hope you give me credit, we shall all be together."

"Yes, I see," said Kate, "very convenient indeed; is the Indian gentleman going away, then?"

"No—oh, no!" said Apperton, "he stays; he occupies only the front room, and dressing-room up stairs; so that Moss or Ned can have the back room in that house; a very nice comfortable place, too—I've been looking at it."

At this period of the conversation the jingle of a Brighton piano-forte resounded in the adjoining drawing-room; and after some preparation, Kate had the satisfaction of hearing Capt. Charles Somerford play upon the flute (an instrument on which he was a capital performer) two or three airs which she had given him years before, and which, from their order of performance, she was pretty well convinced were actually read from the book into which she had copied them, and which the well known sounds, by a natural association of ideas, brought before her eyes as plainly as if she were singing from it herself. The accompaniment was evidently furnished by Mrs. Mackirkincroft, and no doubt the breakfast was made up for the purpose of trying these little "snatches" together.

about which Charles had probably been talking during the voyage, when no instrument was at hand.

"Musical, too," said Apperton; "why Kate, if we strike up an acquaintance with our high and mighty neighbour, you'll be quite in your element; but I suppose it isn't the fashion to be sociable at these watering places."

Poor Mr. Apperton might just at that moment have supposed any thing he pleased, for his lady was so entirely engrossed with the combination of events which were occurring, that she was insensible to his observation, pertinent as it was. She felt herself like a poor isolated wretch, standing on the very edge of a whirlpool, towards which she was gradually drawn, and in which she fully anticipated destruction. Apperton's second appeal, and invitation to walk, roused her, and she prepared to obey and attend him—but she moved mechanically. One sole object engrossed her thoughts and mind, and she neither could see nor hear nor think of any thing else.

The walk was commenced—and—must I confess—I suppose so—that the dignified, well regulated, high-minded Mrs. Katherine Apperton, as she left the house, leaning, too, on her husband's arm, condescended (degraded herself would be the word with very high-flying ladies) so far, as to cast her eyes towards the window of Somerford's room, and that, too, in the hope of again seeing him. She however, was disappointed, and the deserted appearance of the windows and balcony induced her to believe that the whole breakfast party had gone forth to take their exercise. Now, then, even getting away from home did poor Kate no good, for whatever advantageous effect the change of the scene, or the exercise, or the air, or the amusement, might produce upon her health and spirits, the constant dread and apprehension of meeting Somerford at every corner she turned, effectually counterbalanced it; her existence was one constant flutter; and, as I have already said, that her embarrassment escaped the observation of her husband she might have been thankful to bonds, shares, premium and discount, and other *more* interesting matters, which kept his mind fully occupied at this particular crisis.

His anxiety in this respect, however, was productive of a scene, after all. He was particularly desirous of seeing the newspapers of the day, which he had been told would be in a particular coffee-room at one o'clock. From what he should see proclaimed in the "city article" of one of these journals, he could pretty well judge how to direct the proceedings of the

next morning by the post; it would, besides, relieve his anxiety, and make him a more agreeable companion for the rest of the day—that is, if the accounts were favourable; and if truth were told, few things could have occurred which would have had the effect of making him less pleasant; and therefore Kate was as anxious that he should go to this coffee-room in time, where he had been promised a sight of the paper, as he himself could possibly be; and accordingly, at his suggestion, she deposited herself in Mr. Tuppen's library (to which they had subscribed in order to be put in print among the "arrivals"), and taking her seat at a large baize-covered table, plentifully strewed with periodical works, she told her "better half" that she would wait his return, but that if he should be detained beyond the period he expected, or longer than she felt comfortable in her resting-place, if he would proceed homewards, he would there be sure to find her.

Under this agreeable domestic arrangement, away went Apperton, hoping, yet dreading, to see the ruin or exaltation of his fortunes in the columns of the "Times;" leaving Kate huddled up, as it were, within herself, in an agony of distracting doubt and uncertainty.

Whether what followed was the result of accident or sympathy, I do not pretend to say; or whether, which I confess I doubt, Mrs. Apperton had seen Captain Somerford in the library before he saw her; but certain and true it is, that Apperton had not reached the corner of the Steyne, which it was his intention to cross, before Kate perceived, with a feeling far beyond my power of description, that the eyes of her once fondly-beloved Charles Somerford were riveted on her.

The expression of his countenance combined joy with doubt—he seemed to think it could not be, and yet to be assured it was, the object of all his hopes and wishes;—the conflict was but of short duration—in half a minute he was at her side.

"Katherine!" said Somerford—"is this possible—can it be you? Providence smiles on us after all; to think that I should have landed here yesterday, and to find you—you whom of all human beings I was most anxious to behold."

"For mercy's sake, Charles," faltered Kate, "don't, pray don't, speak so loud—these people will see—will hear."

"Well," said Charles, "I care not who hears or who sees—let them know the whole history—let them know, that I am come to prove my constancy and affection for the dearest being that ever lived, and that, unlike the general race of gentlemen in my condition, fortune has favoured me"——

"Fortune," said Kate, her eyes filling with tears—"Oh! Charles, take me out of this place—I shall faint—I am giddy —sick."

"This way—come into the air," said Somerford; take my arm—dearest—dearest—this cannot be reality—isn't it too much happiness for me?"

He offered his arm, which she almost unconsciously took; indeed, if she had not taken it, she would scarcely have been able to support herself; they reached the railings on the cliff, where she stopped a few moments, to imbibe the fresh air and rally her spirits.

"And where is your father?" said Somerford—"quite well?—and Ned grown a man, I suppose?"

"I expect them here this very day," said Katherine.

"I did not write," continued Somerford, "for I proposed going on to London to-morrow, but the surprise I intended has properly recoiled on myself, and you have had all the merit of startling *me*. Oh! Kate, when we were so suddenly and unexpectedly separated, I thought my heart would have burst; but I suppose it was right, and all for the best, at least, there is no use in looking back to days of sorrow; the sky has brightened, and my success and some fortunate expeditions, my promotion, and my expected exchange into another regiment, with a majority, have altered the face of things, and I can now come forward in a different way, and in a somewhat better character, to claim the hand of her I love. I have had, however, a narrow escape with my life, and indeed, so many things to tell you, that I scarcely know where to begin. Why Kate—dearest," said he, seeing her tears fall in torrents, "you do not seem to participate in my joy—have I lost that place in your heart, to claim which, fondly and proudly I have now returned, after years of struggling and discomfort, endured with that one bright object in view?"

"Surely, surely," said Kate, overcome with the wretchedness of her situation, and lost to the fact that she was become an object of curiosity to the passers by, "you might have written during this long period, if—if"——

"Written! my beloved girl," said Somerford; "of what use was my writing? You had yourself desired me not to write—you had interdicted the correspondence."

"I, Charles!" said Mrs. Apperton.

"So your father wrote me word, Kate," said Somerford; "told me that your wish was to leave our intimacy as it was, and that if hereafter circumstances should prove favourable,

and I should return in a situation to renew our connexion, it should, as it were, begin afresh; that we were too young at that period to judge fairly of each other's qualifications, and that it would be idle and ungenerous to maintain a correspondence as lovers, which might bind us to each other, and yet never turn out satisfactorily."

"If my father wrote *that*," said Kate, "I never sanctioned it, and he has much to answer for. My beloved mother, during her life time, expressed much surprise at the cessation of your correspondence, and she—she," said Kate, "was your best and warmest friend in our family; but when *she* died, your name was interdicted in our house, and years have elapsed since it has been breathed by any one of us, excepting myself in sorrow and in solitude."

"But now, Kate," said Somerford, "there's an end to all our cares; all solicitude is over. Who are you staying with? where are you living? tell me all. Your father will now doubtlessly receive me with kindness; and you know you used always to say, that I never suffered anger and resentment to last in my heart. I shall forget all that is past, and seek the sole object of my ambition fairly and openly at once."

"Oh Charles, Charles!" sobbed Katherine, "I cannot—my tongue cleaves to my mouth—I want breath. I never, never can say the word."

"Speak! speak! dearest, dearest Kate," said Somerford, drawing her closer to him as they walked. "There is nothing you can tell, that can give *me* pain. No, I know your heart too well."

"Indeed you know nothing of the horror that impends," said Mrs. Apperton. "Charles! I am guilty, doubly guilty; and now, at this moment, guiltier yet than ever I thought myself capable of being. I shall fall—I shall die here in the open street—I cannot support myself."

"What *has* happened? tell me, Kate," said Somerford. "What can have happened? No calamity—no."

"Oh! worse, worse than death," said Kate. "I am lost, sunk, degraded in my own eyes; debased, wretched, wretched, wretched creature that I am! Take me home, Charles. Leave me, leave me; never see me more. I scarcely know what I am saying; my father has played me a cruel game. He has ruined my happiness for ever."

"Why, Kate," said a shrill voice, in a tone of unusual gayety, close behind them, "I have been hunting you about like a leetle hare; where have you been, Kitty?"

"Who is this man?" said Somerford; "do you know him?"
"Know—oh yes!" said Kate; "I—I—found the library hot and close, that I—I—came out"—
"Bless me!" said Apperton, looking at Somerford. "Why, believe, sir, we are neighbours. I had the pleasure of seeing ou, for a moment, when I was looking at the bed-room in our house this morning. I am sure I am very much obliged you for taking care of Kitty. Hey, Kitty—what, not very l—eh?"
"No, no," said Kitty, "not very ill. I—I—am extremely bliged to this gentleman for his attention." For, at this moent, Kate was so completely overcome by the difficulties of r situation, that she could not make up her mind either to troduce Apperton to Somerford, as her husband, or to intro-ce Somerford to Apperton as an old acquaintance of her's: e consequence was, that Apperton thought Somerford a par-cularly free and easy gentleman, whose very particular atten-ons to Kate seemed in no way disagreeable to her, while merford was very near being extremely rude to Apperton, hose interference with Miss Maxwell he thought excessively ulgar, and entirely misplaced.
"You know Kate, sir," said Apperton.
"I have had that honour many years, sir," said Somerford.
"Why, Kate," said Apperton, "you did not say that you new Captain Somerford when I read his name on the trunk."
"No, I—it did not strike me at the moment," said Mrs. pperton; "one sees so many people in the course of a season, nd then we lose sight of them in—this—in short, it did not ccur at the moment. I—"
Her look to Somerford convinced him that there was a deep nd serious mystery in all this affair; although such was his onfidence in her fidelity, that his thoughts never once took the ght current, and her delicacy was such, that she had not ourage to criminate herself by announcing the fact.
"I am very glad," said Somerford, "that I had the pleasure be near you when you were taken ill; I think you would ave been seriously unwell, if you had remained in that hot brary."
"And I am sure I am very much obliged to you, sir, for our attention," said Apperton. "Come, Kate, we had better o towards home."
"Yes, I think so," said Kate; who at this moment was 'all ing in that direction, between her first lover and her re-ent husband."

"Kate," said Somerford in a whisper, which the noise of the carriages, and the dash of the surf together, rendered *inaudible* to Apperton; "cannot you get rid of this fellow? *Who* is he? Some friend of your father's? He's a great bore. *Make* some excuse, and shake him off. I'll tell him some—"

"Hush! hush!" said Kate; pressing his arm in order to check the disposition to be uncivil, which it was quite clear Charles Somerford felt.

"Good news from London for me," said Apperton; "funds up as I want them; three-eighths yesterday, and one per cent. the day before;—that will do, Kate."

"What! are you turned stockbroker, Kate?" said Somerford.

"Mr. Apperton is," said Kate, drawing the conversation to the point she so much dreaded.

"Introduce me," said Charles; "civility costs nothing; a friend of the family ought to be known by me."

"I believe, Mr. Apperton," said Kate, "I ought to introduce you to Captain Somerford, since he is *my* acquaintance, in due form."

"Sir," said Apperton, taking off his hat, and bowing, "I am very glad to have the pleasure of knowing you. Tedious voyage, sir? Fine weather home?"

"I came," said Somerford, "in the ship whence I landed yesterday, only from the Cape of Good Hope, where I had been staying some time for the benefit of my health."

"And where," said Kate, "I heard you had died."

"Indeed!" said Somerford; "I assure you that is not the fact, for here I am in *propriâ personâ;* we have been ten weeks coming from the Cape, having touched at St. Helena and Ascension. Don't you recollect, Kate, how we talked about St. Helena before I went out? and when I saw it, and saw Buonaparte's tomb—it brought all our conversation so fresh to my memory!"

"Oh, Kate," said Apperton, "you knew Captain Somerford before he went out first?"—

"Before I went any where, I should say, sir," said Somerford.

"Well, I am extremely glad you have found us here, sir," said the poor contented stockbroker. "How very odd, Kate, you should not have recollected the name at once. I—never—"

"What, did you affect to forget *my* name, Kate?" said Somerford, who endeavoured, by a sort of playfulness, to hide

the real interest which he felt, and the excessive disquiet which, notwithstanding his civility, Apperton's manner, and especially his manner towards Kate, had inspired.

"And is Ned grown a fine fellow?" said Somerford.

"Aye, indeed he is," said Apperton, who would speak—talking for his wife, who could not; "he has been employing himself, during the last few weeks, in hunting a beautiful shadow in the shape of a distressed damsel, who occasionally crosses his way."

"But a'nt Jane and he—"

"*Oh! she* is married," said Kate; "married to a Major Overall—and—gone abroad."

"Kate, what *is* the matter?" whispered Charles; "you are surely very ill."

"Pray, pray, don't mind me; for mercy's sake, don't," replied she—in another whisper.

"Do you like brill, Captain Somerford?" said Apperton.

"What, sir!" said Charles, whose whole attention was devoted to Kate, while he saw, for some reasons yet unexplained, that it was considered right by her, that he should not let his interest be visible.

"Brill!—I scarcely know what it is," said Somerford.

"Fish! fish!" said Apperton; "what Godfrey Moss calls a workhouse turbot; but I like it. I have ordered one for to-day, and some soles; perhaps, Captain Somerford, you'll do us the pleasure of dining with us. I expect Maxwell, and Ned, and Old Mousetrap—you recollect Old Mousy?"

"Oh, perfectly;" said Somerford; "I'm sure I shall be very happy; I—" Here Kate gave his arm a tremendous squeeze—"that is, if I—I *am* engaged—but I—"

"Oh! well! well!" said Apperton; "don't put yourself out of the way; we shall be very glad to see you. Mrs. Apperton and I of course are delighted to receive any friend of the family."

"You are very kind," said Somerford, who concluded that he had now made the discovery, that Kate was on a visit to this Mr. Apperton and his wife, and that they were at *their* house to be joined by the rest of the Maxwell family.—"If I can get off my engagement, I shall have great pleasure; and pray, how is Mousetrap?"

"Just the same as ever," said Apperton, "constantly grumbling, complaining of every body, smoking cigars, drinking gin-and-water, and finding fault with all the world who do not follow his example."

"And his reverend brother?" said Somerford.

"He of Fudley-cum-Pipes?" said Apperton, "alive and merry: it was he who made me a Benedict."

Another squeeze of Somerford's arm from Kate startled him. He had heard nothing in the conversation that required such an illustration, for it appeared to him that nothing upon earth could be more entirely a matter of indifference, as far as he was concerned, than the matrimonial proceedings of his newly-found friend and companion.

They had now reached home, and after another tender inquiry about her health, Somerford quitted Kate, who, more dead than alive, proceeded up-stairs to her room. Apperton and Somerford stood on the steps of the doors of their respective houses, which joined, and several observations with regard to the weather and the times, and the sea and the Downs, and the environs of Brighton, and the tediousness of long voyages, were exchanged; after which Apperton entered his dwelling, and Somerford, full of happiness (clouded, it must be confessed, by the mysterious conduct of his beloved), proceeded to take another stroll; having, in departing, pledged himself to be at Mr. Apperton's punctually at seven, at which late hour, for them, the dinner was fixed, to accommodate the coming guests; and rejoicing in an opportunity of first meeting Maxwell on his return in a mixed party, where there would be none of that shyness or restraint which a *tête-à-tête*, after so long an absence, might naturally be expected to produce, under the peculiar circumstances of their last separation.

CHAPTER XV.

Are then the joys of this bless'd meeting dash'd
So soon, so soon will fortune snatch this from me,
And mock my vain embrace? Thus like one
Who in a dream of mighty toil and labour,
Strives to embrace some visionary form;
Just as he seems to clasp the lovely object
It slides away and vanishes to air;
So I, who through opposing difficulties
Have cut my tedious way to thy lov'd arms,
At length am disappointed, and but see thee
To take my last farewell. Oh! slipp'ry state
Of human pleasures, fleet and volatile,
Given us and snatched again in one short moment,
To mortify our hopes and edge our sufferings.

TRAPP.

is clear that things could not long remain as they were at
ıoment when Charles and Katherine parted to meet again
ıner. It was past two o'clock; the Maxwells had al-
r reached Hatt's house at Merstham (so the landlord of
'olliffe Arms is actually named); the unhappy bride had
vn herself upon her bed in an agony of grief; Apperton
ɜeated himself in the drawing-room, and was reading the
ıton Gazette: and Somerford, somewhat mystified, had
to join his yellow friend, Macleod, on the Marine Pa-

ımerford, it must be confessed, was a good deal puzzled at
'estraint under which it was evident Kate laboured—her
ı, her agitation, the mention of her wretchedness, confound-
im; and when he found himself alone, he thought still
ɜ of her manner, and the matter of her conversation. It
evident to him, that she was the visiter of Mr. Apperton
his wife, to whom the gentleman had several times referred
ıg their walk; but he could not imagine, unless the lady
extraordinarily fascinating, what inducement Kate could
for an association with a person so vulgar, so coarse, and
brupt in his manner as our friend the stockbroker; little
ning that he had already beheld the Mrs. Apperton of
n his new friend had spoken; and still less imagining that
ıe coarse, vulgar, and abrupt, was actually the husband
s own dear, delicate, amiable, and accomplished Kate.

But if his mind was thus filled with chaotic vis
must have been the state of poor Mrs. Apperton, wh
out the whole of her interview and conversation wi
ford had not the courage to confess her own infidel
—an infidelity which, however glaringly apparent, a
destructive to his happiness, was in fact the work of
A thousand times had she wondered why Charles
relinquished writing; and in the earlier years of
in India, she mentioned her surprise that he shoul
tirely neglected them: but to none of these won
even questions, did she get any thing like a satisfac
nation or reply from her parent. After her mother
far as Kate knew, all communication ceased betw
ther and Somerford; and if any thing could have be
from the manner in which he spoke of him, before
speaking of him at all, it was that he had turned
that if he had not positively disgraced himself abro
no good was ever to be expected from him.

It was under impressions so received, that she
herself obedience to her father's wishes, with resp
perton. She had forced herself to believe ill of C
cause she had heard nothing from him; and the to
her thoughts by the insinuations of Maxwell unfort
cording with her own sense of personal neglect a
pride, she tacitly agreed to the compact by which s
joined never to mention Charles's name; and all
recollection of him was indelibly stamped upon her
suffered her principle of duty to gain the mastery o
conceded to filial obedience the dearest hope of her

Imagine then what *her* feelings must have been,
less than three days after the final destruction o
hopes, she beheld the long-lost, long-loved Somerfo
ed to his native country, promoted, enriched, and
circumstances in a situation where he might reasor
dently, and fairly demand the hand of Maxwell's dau
Kate did not know, even then, that there was an ob
yond his former want of fortune, which Maxwell, fu
and prejudice, never could have surmounted, and w
in the way of his marriage with Kate. This, I sa
not know, and therefore were her grief and remorse
row and repentance, far beyond the power of e
When the real truth came to her Charles's knowled
he, ardent and affectionate as he was, constant as t

the sun, who had hastened across the great world of water
claim the hand of her whose heart he thought his own,
very first moment that he was enabled by circumstances to
so—when he should discover that *she* had played him fa
nd married another, what would his feelings be—how wo
e despise, contemn her!—they never could meet aga
ow could she confess to him the conduct of her father
ow could she endure the sight of that father, now she fu
mprehended his conduct? What was to be done?—
urs were flying—the time would come—Charles would
ong them, still hoping, still loving, still perhaps un
ved.——Could she write to him—could she explain, in a sh
er what she dared not trust herself to utter?—should s
ve it until her brother arrived, and make him the channel
mmunication?

All these conflicting doubts and fears added to the repe
nce that she had not at once declared the whole of the c
umstances to her husband, the moment she knew who th
eighbour was, racked her brain, and so agitated her wh
frame, that a series of hysteric and fainting fits was the con
quence; and Apperton, who had been summoned to her roo
recommended some hartshorn and water and a little scent,
suring himself and her that she would be much better in
hour or two; and, as he did not expect her father till la
seeing that he could only have received their summons
breakfast-time, she might indulge herself in sleep, which wo
restore her, and make her as well as ever.

Whatever sort of speculator our friend Apperton might ha
been in 'Change Alley, or however skilful in bleeding bu
and physicking bears, it was very evident that ministering t
mind diseased was out of his line; nor, being himself one
those iron men who never know what illness means, did
relish the care of an invalid, or the necessary stillness of
sick-room; confiding, therefore, his wife to the guardiansh
of her maid, Alsop, who, having lived with her four or fi
years, he presumed must know her constitution perfectly,
proceeded to walk off his anxiety, and gain an appetite for l
brill and roasted mutton, for which dainties he had stipulat
as part of his dinner.

When he was gone, or rather as soon as his wretched bri
was conscious of his absence, she found herself attended
Alsop, who was bathing her temples and chafing her hanc
The poor creature was terrified at her mistress's appearanc
for during the *whole* period of her service under her, she

never seen such indications of deep feeling or violent passion: she used to cite her young lady as an example of *placid* evenness of temper, not to be paralleled ; but here she *beheld* her almost delirious, and in agonies, the source or cause *of* which she felt she dared not breathe. She at length begged to be left alone—and the maid unwillingly consented to leave her ; for although, of course, she was unable to account for the terrible effect produced upon her mistress, she was quite convinced that it was not wise or prudent to quit her altogether ; lest, as she afterward said, she should lay violent hands on herself. Such is the force of feeling and of passion, which overcome the mild and quiet among women—the laugher and the cryer of every-day society feel little though they exercise their feelings constantly ; but the placid, modest, unassuming, gentle female, who, not easily excited, nor generally pleased, who fixes her whole affection upon one dear object, and lives in silence on the recollection of his love, when the storm of passion comes, suffers, as Katherine Maxwell did at *this* moment,—when her heart, torn by duty, love, grief, remorse, and anger that she had been deluded and deceived, for the first time in her life beat with something dreadfully like resentment against her parent.

Something was to be done, she felt it would be impossible for her to suffer Charles to hear of her marriage, unaccompanied by her justification—she knew their meeting after he did know of it was impossible. What then ?—she should never see him again, and he would leave her eternally, with the conviction on his mind, that she was a fickle, heartless, worthless jilt.

One resource alone was left—a few lines would put him in possession of the fact : it had occurred to her before, but ought she, the wife of another, write to the beloved of her heart, separated as she was for ever from him ?—yes, in vindication of her conduct. But how to get her note conveyed ?—a confidence must be reposed in her maid, and that too in the first week of the honeymoon. She would be the messenger, the go-between, and this she could not suffer her to be, without condescending to an explanation of all the foregoing circumstances, in order to justify the measure to herself, and induce the woman to make herself a party to her mistress's contrivances. Could she do *that ?*—could she debase herself to ask a favour of her menial, and bind that menial to secrecy—to open her heart to her inferior, who possessed no one quality to excite confidence or interest ?—She hesitated—trembled at

the thought—resolved rather to let the worst occur than take this damning step; and having so resolved, proceeded to her writing-desk, and scrawled the hateful lines, which were to announce to Charles her own falsehood, and his unhappiness.

She felt herself, for the first time in her life, a guilty creature; the very rattling of the door alarmed her—the sound of what she thought her husband's voice terrified her, she hastily closed the desk—all was silent—again it was opened, and, almost blinded with her tears, again she began her letter. The door of the room opened suddenly, and Apperton stood before her; the letter, of which two or three lines were written, lay on the table—she dared not snatch it to conceal it—she sat motionless, and almost senseless—she then resolved to explain the whole of the circumstances to Apperton. He, however, did not take the trouble to approach the table where the letter lay; but having asked Kate how she felt herself, informed her, upon hearing that she was a little better, that he had met a city friend during his walk, and had invited him to come and dine; for, added he, when there's victuals enough for six there's enough for seven, so one does a civil thing without much cost. "He is a very lively pleasant fellow," added Apperton, "and very fond of a song; so if our neighbour brings in his flute, you and they may make up some harmony, to please the old gentleman."

This speech gave time to Kate to collect herself, and with an air of indifference as to the writing, she replaced the beginning of her letter to Charles in the desk and closed it. Her answer to the proposition was neither clear nor intelligible, and she saw with pleasure his departure again under a promise to return by five, if *she* would promise to keep herself quiet till that time.

Apperton went—but it was doomed that his absence should have as little effect as his presence, upon the work which Katherine had in hand. Scarcely had she resumed her paper and pen, and was endeavouring to express herself so as to wound her Somerford as little as possible, when Alsop abruptly bounced into the room and put a letter into her hands. It came, she believed, from next door—from the gentleman who was to dine with them.

"Leave it," said Kate,—"leave it—go—leave *me*."

Alsop did as she was desired, but certainly somewhat more enlightened as to the cause of her mistress's sudden illness than she previously had been; the size of the letter proclaimed that it must be *something* more than a mere answer to a dinner in-

vitation, and it came from a gentleman of whom her mistress, the night before, professed to know nothing—sudden affair, *especially* considering how lately her mistress had been married. *All* these "considerations," added to the words "devil of a blow up," which Captain Somerford's English servant had whispered in her ear as he delivered the said letter into her hand, set Miss, or Mrs. (I will not pretend to say which it was) Alsop into the mind for "finding out;" her organs of inquisitiveness, like those of all domestics, were as big as walnuts, and they swelled preternaturally whenever her master or mistress left any point under discussion to be discovered; accordingly, Mrs. Alsop divided her time between listening at the bed-room door and peeping through the keyhole while her mistress read the Captain's letter, and going herself to "fetch a little hot water," or something of that sort, out of the kitchen of the Captain's house, where she might encounter the Captain's servant and obtain a little more illumination as to his mysterious announcement of a domestic explosion.

It was some time before Kate could muster courage to open the fatal letter—the superscription told the dreadful truth—Charles was aware of her inconstancy, for the packet was addressed to Mrs. Apperton. This seemed, amid all her agony of grief, to relieve her mind—he knew the worst—the blow had been inflicted, and not by her hand. Again and again she essayed to reach the dreaded appeal, until at length with one desperate effort she seized it, and tearing it open, read as follows:—

"It was natural that you should have been unable to tell me yourself—and I am glad that it was not from *your* lips I heard it—that I have lived to hear it at all, is my bitterest misfortune. Oh, Kate! if it were possible for you to know my heart—to appreciate its devotion, its unqualified, undivided love for you, you would better understand my feelings at a moment when years of toil, of danger, and of hope are repaid by intelligence, than which, the most painful of deaths would to me have been less afflicting. I do not seek to wound your feelings or harass your gentle nature—some art, some treachery must have been practised upon you, to have effected this terrible change in your feelings and affection. I must, however, vindicate myself from an imputation of neglectfulness, even though the truth should implicate others in a charge of duplicity.

"I was commanded by your father to abstain from writing

to you; it was on the condition that I ceased to correspond with you, that he permitted me to hope for eventual happiness; one of his letters is now before me, and there he says, 'Let her affections take their natural course, and if she remain firm to the feelings which you tell me you believe she entertains towards you, when you return, I may *then* be inclined to listen to your proposals, although I neither bind myself to do so, nor even give you hopes of ultimate success with her. The affections of the boy may wear off with time; and since you are as likely to change your views of happiness as she may be, I *think* it most conducive to the comfort of both of you, to dissipate at once the idea of any thing like an engagement.'

"Surely, Kate, you must have been aware of this letter—you must have been told the nature of this test by which our affections were to be tried. Oh! when I reflect upon the days that are gone—when, fainting under the heat of climate, and the fatigues of service, I have called to mind that voice and those features which I so longed to hear and to gaze upon, and have felt cheered and inspired in the fulfilment of my most arduous duties, by the hope—the one bright hope of my life—to deserve the consent of your father to our union. When I recollect the delight I experienced when chance, or as I considered, Providence, had given me a considerable prize in the Calcutta lottery, in addition to the prize-money I received for the successful attack and capture of a fort in which treasure to a large amount was concealed,—the joy—the agony of pleasure I felt when I reckoned myself master of that which would purchase my promotion, and make me worthy of you,—my sorrow and my disappointment are now more grievous.

"Far be it from me to complain of the inscrutable decrees of that Being to whom my prayers for the happiness of my Kate have been daily offered up ever since I left her; but how much less of sorrow should I have endured, if I had never risen from the bed of sickness on which for weeks and months I lay extended! Then I clung to life with earnestness, and prayed to be restored—for what? to see the object of all my hopes and wishes married to another. But as if to make this blow more dreadful, look at the points of time connected with the event; if, instead of staying at the Cape for three months, I had proceeded home at all hazards, I might have yet saved myself from misery—nay, if we had not been delayed a week at St. Helena beyond the period we expected, I should still have been in England before your marriage. There is a fatality *in this, and I, wretch* that I am, must submit.

"When this reaches you I shall be on my road to London; I have left orders for my servant to follow me in the *evening*. For me to have remained near you, to have seen you *again*, would have been impossible; to meet your father after what has passed, at all events so soon after the heavy blow has fallen, would be painful and useless. It is in vain for me to doubt that he always had some fixed objection to me beyond my want of fortune—an objection incompatible, as it seems to me, with his long and ancient friendship with my father. My mother once or twice, when wounded and offended by his conduct after my father's death, seemed inclined to explain to me the nature of that objection, for she was aware of it; but whatever it may be, her feelings always overcame her when she made the effort to inform me. Her death, during my absence, renders it impossible I should ever know from her; and what has occurred in your family, makes it highly improbable that I should ever come to any explanation with them.

"In the hurried whirl of passion and feeling under which I labour, I can form no settled plan of proceeding. I have now no tie to England. I have no relation that I know of,—and now you are all lost to me—no friends—oh! what a blank what a desert is my country!—I stand alone in the multitude—spurned by the friend of my father, and rejected by her who was dearer to me than my life.

"I had collected for you, Kate, all, all for you—some jewels of no great value; but rare, I believe, in this country—on which I have gazed a thousand times, and fancied them worn by you—which you alone must possess; but I suppose the customs of society render your acceptance of them now im proper;—be it so—short will be the period before the gift may be received without apprehension. What I have endured within the three last hours will effect that which the climate of India and the severe fatigue I have undergone, have failed to accom plish. When I am dead, Kate, there can be no impropriet in your receiving my poor present as a legacy. Look at thos jewels sometimes, and think of the once happy companion o your youth—of him who lived but for you, and whose hope whose happiness, whose existence, were sacrificed to th cruelty of those who made you false.

"It will be impossible, as indeed it would be unworthy, conceal any of the facts connected either with my attachme to you, or our meeting here to-day, from your father or friend They and you may rely upon it that I shall never furth intrude myself. My feelings towards you are such, that

could not meet and associate with you on terms of mere friendship; the depth of my affection and the bitterness of my disappointment prevent it. The course for me to pursue is clear and plain. Religion and morality point the way, and I shall follow it—the struggle is now to be made. I could not trust myself to see you—that would have been too much to bear. In this way only could I summon courage to abandon all my earthly expectations and comfort. My heart aches to its very centre, my head burns with fever, my eyes stream with tears while I sign the doom of my own wretchedness. It is a duty I owe to you, and to those who now alone must be dear to you. Farewell, Kate—farewell for ever!—the blessing of heaven be upon you! pity and pardon me if I have ever offended you, and accept the forgiveness of one who, ignorant as he is of the circumstances which have operated on your mind, and led to what has occurred, cannot but attribute to others the conduct which has sealed his wretchedness. Farewell! C. S."

This letter it would have been the height of indelicacy, not to speak of a breach of confidence in me, to have laid before the reader, if it had been seen by nobody but the writer, and her to whom it was addressed; but Kate having, when she had read it, fallen into a fit, from which she recovered only to relapse, and then sink in a state of insensibility on the bed, Mrs. Alsop took the liberty before she applied any remedy or restorative to her mistress to read every word of it too; after which it underwent a similar perusal by Mr. Apperton himself, who, when he returned, found his unhappy wife fallen into a slumber, produced by the violence of her agitation, and some mixture which her maid had administered to her, in which it was clear the soothing influence of opium had not been wanting.

The sentiments and feelings which the epistle excited in the bosoms of the two persons who had perused it were, as it might be supposed, tolerably powerful, although entirely different in their nature. To the maid, it was an enlightenment for which she had been in some degree prepared, by the hints of Captain Somerford's servant, and the perturbation of her mistress, whom she forthwith denounced, in Godfrey Moss's pronunciation, "a sly cretur," for not having made her a confidant, although her maid now of five or six years standing; but to Apperton it opened an entirely new scene—it exhibited a vista of matrimonial *happiness* which he by no means had anticipated, while the allusion to the elder Maxwell's duplicity

coupled with his cordial anxiety to conclude the match between him and Kate, gave a new character to his warmth and cordiality, and established the stockbroker, in his own mind, as a sort of stopgap, who, so far from having excited a flame in the bosom of the young lady, had been rather used as an extinguisher to put one out, which had been burning there for some time previous.

Unconscious as he was that Mrs. Alsop had had the benefit of enlightening herself from the same source, Apperton began to calculate how he should act upon the knowledge he had so very uncomfortably acquired. If he admitted that he had become acquainted with what was evidently a family secret, and which had most assiduously been kept from his knowledge, he knew enough of the world, and its ways, to know that he ought to feel (and express his feeling too) extremely angry at the line of conduct which old Maxwell had adopted towards him; because although it may form no part of a parent's duty to furnish his daughter's lover with a list of the former candidates for her favour, still, the extreme caution which hindered even the slightest reference to his name and connexion, with the *ruse* by which the correspondence between the young people had been cut short, preyed upon his mind; and, laying down the letter exactly where he found it, he retired from the apartment hastily, and told Mrs. Alsop (whom he had already wrongfully metamorphosed into a cunning *intriguante*, and a faithful confidant of his wife,) that her mistress was asleep, and that he would return in half an hour, thinking it better not to disturb her.

As he descended the steps of the house door, purposing to walk off his mortification, and ruminate upon his difficulties in the fresh air, he beheld Captain Somerford's servant piling on a wheel-barrow, divers and sundry packages, in the very act of emigrating from Brighton; an exhibition which gladdened his eyes, and cheered his heart; for not only did it give appearance of his rival's departure, but authenticated, as far as it went, his promises and intentions contained in the letter to Kate.

The servant having put nearly the finishing stroke to his packing, touched his hat to Apperton, and delivered him a note, which was intended to have been the whole portion of the correspondence which was to be subjected to his inspection; he took it, and opened it, and found the following lines:—

"Captain Somerford presents his compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Apperton, regrets that business of urgent nature, which

calls him to London immediately, will prevent his having the honour of dining with them to-day."

"I am very sorry," said Apperton, mechanically, in the hearing of the servant; "and the captain is gone?"

"He went off, sir, at half-past three," said the servant; "I follow him by the night coach, sir."

"To London?" said Apperton—thinking it a good plan to get as much information as possible, in order to compare his acts with his intentions, and so form a standard by which he might regulate his reliance upon all the promises contained in his farewell epistle.

"Yes, sir, to London," replied the man; "to Ibbotson's Hotel, in Vere-street, Cavendish square."

Apperton was puzzled whether to "part friends," as the boys say, and send his compliments to the captain, and express his regret at not seeing him, which he most assuredly did not feel; human nature prevailed, and he walked off, grumbling to himself.

And now, who among us is there, who would not have grumbled, under similar circumstances? To a strongly sensitive mind, such a discovery as Apperton had made, would have produced a storm of contending passion and feeling, which it would have required not a little to calm or allay. Apperton, in less than ten minutes, balanced the uncomfortable part of his case in the opposite scale, to the advantages derivable from his securing the person and fortune of his wife, and the control and influence which the connexion gave him over her father's property. As *he* stood in the world, and with his views and passions, there was scarcely any indignity which he would not have suffered out of the money market, to carry his points in it; and after summing up in his mind a thousand different speculations, and a thousand different schemes, he determined to put his pride and indignation into his pocket, affect to believe in the excuse of Captain Somerford, never acknowledge to having seen the letter he had written to Kate, and to attribute his wife's indisposition to the sun, the sea, the air, or the water, or indeed, to any thing except that which it truly arose from.

It was clear by this mode of proceeding, that he should not only escape a serious discussion with Maxwell, which might terminate in an open rupture and general separation of the parties, but he would also escape the imputation of having read his wife's letter; and he satisfied himself, now that her swain was gone, all would go on well again; and having formed his

opinion of women upon certain specimens of the sex with which he had become familiar in his earlier days, he felt assured that Kate would say nothing about what had passed, but, depositing the epistle of her once loved Somerford in her writing-desk, meet her family at dinner, as calm, as cool, and as collected as if nothing had happened. Whether he had formed a just estimate of his wife's feelings and sincerity, we may perhaps hereafter discover. His notion was, to use his own expression, to let her that she would "take it coolly," as a sister-in-law of his own once did, when her lover was locked up in a china closet for seven hours, during which her husband dined, drank his wine with his wife, discussed his tea and toast, sipped his lady's and water, smoked his pipe, and retired to rest ;—so much anxious he was that the whole affair might blow over in a similar manner.

In the mean time Kate was slowly recovering from the effect of her agitation and the dose, whatever it was, with which her careful attendant had plied her ; but the sight of the fatal letter, the moment it caught her eye as she was arousing herself from the death-like langour which had fallen over her, threw her again into strong hysterics.

It would have been vain for Alsop to deny that she had made herself mistress of its contents during the swoon, or rather syncope, of her lady ; the interest she exhibited, the soothing tenderness of manner, so marked in her conduct to Kate, proved that she was aware of the cause and origin of her distress and disorder.

"Where, where is my husband ?" were the first words poor Katherine uttered.

"He has been here, ma'am," said Alsop, "and told me he should return presently ; for he thought it best not to disturb you."

"Disturb—God help me !" said Kate ; "when shall I rest ? Oh ! my heart, my heart ! Did Mr. Apperton see this letter ?" asked she.

"I really don't know," said Alsop, delighted at the approach to something like confidence in her. "I'm sure, if he did, ma'am, he must be too much of a gentleman to have read it."

"I don't know," said Katherine, faintly smiling ; "under the circumstances, I should think him justified in doing so. Oh, and is this all reality ? Have I not been dreaming some horrible dreams ?"

No, ma'am, no," said Alsop, "it's all true and real; and sure, if you had seen the captain when he went out to go y, you would have thought him mad, stark staring mad."
Is he gone ?" said Katherine, gasping for breath.
Went at half-past three, to the minute, ma'am," said)p; "and his man is off after him, with all the luggage parcels that came here yesterday."
That is some relief," said Mrs. Apperton; "give me the er, Alsop."
Alsop did as she was desired, and Kate received it with an rt at tranquillity; but it was vain: unconsciously and in-ntarily she pressed the senseless folds of the envelope, as er very existence was identified with the words it con-ed.
Had she but delayed her decision in favour of Apperton a short weeks, she might have married *him* to whom her was plighted, and have made him happy, who, in her et society and under her gentle influence, would have en-d her comfort and his own honour and respectability; but sy and unhappy in the constant recollection of one whose e she dared not mention, and whose long silence she had taught to construe into indifference, she relinquished the at visions which had adorned her earlier days, and caught prospect of tranquil existence, which, when once the t's first love is blighted, is all that woman may expect to y.
ut when she thought of what Charles himself was suffering harles, upon whom the disappointment of his hopes had n as a thunderbolt; who, unlike her, surrounded by rela-s and friends, stood isolated in the world. The thoughts ome associated with her; the cheering smile of her father coming him in his advanced rank and improved circum-ces; the kind friendship of the ingenuous Edward—all, were lost, buried in one chaotic mass: and Somerford was own into the metropolis, scarcely convalescent from what l been reported a mortal illness, without one human being minister to his wants and wishes, or cheer him in the hour sickness and of sorrow.
"He is really gone, then," said Kate; gazing on the open ce, while tears chaced each other down her pale cheeks. one—where! I am better now—I can cry—my heart is ier. Oh why—why did I not see him for one minute, for moment, to have told him I was not the heartless being—the but perhaps it is better as it is."

"Kate, may I come in?" said Apperton, knocking at the door, which Alsop (who had lived in a good family before she came to the Maxwells,) had previously locked.

"No, no! not for the world!" said Kate, in a hurried whisper to Alsop, "presently—say presently—oh! not now!"

Alsop assured her master that her lady was not sufficiently well to see or speak to him just yet; but that she would come down to him in the drawing-room when she was a little more recovered.

"I trust that heaven will forgive my father for his cruelty to me," murmured Kate; "I thought that he had confidence in me; but no, his commands were not enough; he could not trust me for obedience, and so—so—Charles—poor Charles!—Oh! mercy! mercy on me!"

Here terminated the scene for the present. Kate again fell into hysterics, and again was subjected by her maid to the discipline of all the established remedies for such complaints; but Alsop was soon convinced that any efforts of her mistress to rally, so as to present herself at the table when her father should arrive, would be perfectly vain; and therefore having tranquillized her for the moment, she descended to the drawing-room, according to her promise, to inform Apperton that rest was absolutely essential for her mistress, and that although she saw no immediate necessity for calling in medical assistance, she thought that she ought not to be moved or disturbed until the arrival of her father, under whose opinion and advice they ought to act as occasion should require.

The truth is, that, independently of her bodily ills, Katherine was at certain periods delirious; and Mrs. Alsop knew, by experience, that nothing in the world is so dangerous to domestic tranquillity as temporary light-headedness in the lady of a family: secrets that have been buried in the deepest holes and corners for years, are blurted out in the most unceremonious manner; and as the wary maid knew enough of her mistress's feelings to be quite sure that any violent exhibition of candour would be far from complimentary or agreeable to her husband, she wished to keep him apart from his wife until the feverish restlessness under which she was labouring should have subsided, and the chance of his hearing any unpleasant truths relative either to himself, or any body else, should have proportionably diminished.

"What," said Apperton, "what do you think is the cause of this indisposition, Alsop?"

"Upon my word," said Alsop, "I have no kind of idea, sir.

sometimes the marine effluvia affects ladies on this coast, the air is so uncommon bracing. I have known ladies who have been unable to remain here any length of time; it may be that —you know, sir—"

"Nothing has happened to alarm or agitate her?" said Apperton.

"Not the smallest thing in life, at least as I know of," said Alsop.

"She has not told you of any thing, I mean?" said he.

"Not a syllable, sir," replied the waiting woman; "I think it might have been the prawns my mistress eat at breakfast, because I know they don't *dis*gest easy; but there's no telling, sir—the human frame is so delicate, that—but I'd better not stay away too long, sir—I'll come down again presently, and let you know, sir—I think I hear my mistress calling."

Saying which, Mrs. Alsop returned to the bed-room,—the result of the conversation with her master being, his entire belief that she was ignorant of the real cause of his wife's illness, and his perfect conviction that nobody had read the letter except Kate and himself; all of which belief and conviction went to strengthen him in the determination of stating to Maxwell the plain fact of her indisposition, in the first instance, and afterward incidentally mentioning the recognition and invitation of Captain Somerford, leaving both to work as they might, he remaining ignorant of the cause, and consequently unsuspicious of the effects produced upon his wife.

As the evening approached, Katherine did not rally, and it was almost seven o'clock when her maid pronounced the utter impossibility of her coming down to receive her father, or even of her getting up. She prescribed a huge basin of tea, and quiet; and considering she was trying the difficult experiment of ministering to the mind, perhaps that regimen was as good as any other. At all events, for the first week of a honeymoon, things did not look over lively, and Apperton had worked himself up into a little fever of his own, when a sudden change was given to the current of his thoughts by the arrival of the travelling carriage, and a thundering knock at the fragile door of the house. He was on the alert in an instant to receive his visiters; and, in a few minutes, Maxwell was in the drawing-room, Ned on the top of the stairs, and Godfrey Moss, taking his time, clambering as he called it, crying out in a shrill, feigned voice—

"Kittums! Kittums!" as if poor Kate could smile, or run to receive him as she would have done a little week before.

The secret of her illness could not be kept from Maxwell, who, being a bit of a fatalist, had two or three times told his companions that he anticipated something disagreeable on his arrival at Brighton. This, to some people, might pass for prescience, and, being a Scotchman, might in Maxwell do duty for second-sight; but it should be recollected, that, before he left London on the expedition, he was aware that the bane of his hopes, the orphan child of his friend, the discarded love of his daughter, was not only in England, but actually at Brighton.

Maxwell was visibly and deeply affected when he heard of his child's illness; he despatched Alsop to prepare her for his visit, and Apperton's agitation, caused by a thousand contending feelings (if his sensations may be dignified with such a name), added not a little to his anxiety and solicitude. Ned, who loved his sister fondly, and who had a thousand things to tell her about his romantic affair with Maria, was suddenly overcast with gloom, and Moss, who anticipated that the "mutton" would be punctual to a moment at seven, sat himself down in a dark corner and grunted; and when the servant brought in candles, took an opportunity of inquiring whether the dinner was nearly ready, bidding him tell the cook to send it up whenever it was done,—as those who wanted to eat, might as well have it hot, and as for those who did not, it did not signify whether it got cold upon the table or in the kitchen.

In less than half an hour after their arrival, Alsop announced her mistress's readiness to receive her father, and Maxwell, availing himself of the permission, proceeded to the apartment where she lay extended on her bed.

CHAPTER XV.

"Take heed of pride, and curiously consider
How brittle the foundation is, on which
You labour to advance it. Niobe,
Proud of her numerous issue, durst contemn
Latona's double burthen; but what followed?"

MASSINGER.

"THIS is, indeed, a sad business," said Maxwell, as he re-entered the dinner parlour, where the customary meal had been in progress, under the command of Moss, and with the cordial acquiescence of Apperton, who kept aloof from the sick chamber in order to give Katherine an opportunity, if she chose, of explaining to her father the particulars of what had occurred—"poor Kate is seriously ill."

"Ah!" said Moss, helping himself to a bumper of Port wine, his sole and sovereign remedy at dinnertime for all evils. But he said it in a tone which implied, although he knew nothing of what had actually happened, that her indisposition was "all along of her marriage with a man she did not care about."

"Is she feverish, sir?" said Apperton.

"Very," replied Maxwell; "she must be kept perfectly quiet—the agitation of her mind just at this juncture would be productive of very serious results."

"Has she seen any old acquaintance here," said Moss, "who has stirred up her feelings?"

"Moss, Moss!" said Maxwell, in a tone, calculated, as he hoped, to check any further conversation of that character.

Apperton felt the blood rise into his cheeks; a sensation produced not only from the consciousness of his being privy to the whole of the affair, but from a sense of mortification that the facts connected with her early attachment were so generally known.

"Nothing to be sure could be more inopportune, or uncomfortable:" said Maxwell; "however, there are little worries in life which must be endured, and, let us hope, overcome; she'll be better in a day or two;—Apperton, a glass of wine.

"With all my heart, sir," said Apperton; "I'll drink to Kate's speedy recovery."

"With all my heart," said Maxwell.

And in this sort of broken desultory manner the colloquy was maintained, while the servants were necessarily present; but it was clear that Maxwell was fraught with matter of more importance, and that he was only waiting for an opportunity to unburthen his mind to his son-in-law: who, on the other hand, fondly hoped that his father-in-law would suffer him to remain in ignorance of the facts of the case, none of which he pretended to know. Apperton sat half trembling at every turn in the conversation, convinced, in his own small mind, that his wife would never be so silly as to confess to her father that her indisposition was the result of an interview with a person whose correspondence he had interdicted, and a connexion with whom he had so decidedly declined.

But Apperton knew little of the innate purity of the being to whom he was united. The savage possessor of gold could not be more ignorant of the intrinsic value of his propetry, than was the stockbroker, of the worth of his exemplary and ill-fated wife. Her first impulse was to relieve her heart of a weight of wo and self-reproach by detailing minutely to her father all that had occurred. At first, he felt angry with Somerford; then, as the circumstances of their accidental meeting developed themselves, he softened into something like pity for his disappointment, and approbation of her honourable conduct;—he blamed not his daughter's first concealment of her acquaintance with his name when she saw it, or rather heard Apperton repeat it; when he read his letter, which Katherine gave him, he seemed agitated with conflicting feelings and passions; the exposure of his own duplicity naturally irritated him, although in Kate's state of health and spirits he did not suffer his anger to appear; but in conclusion, when, in the fullness and bitterness of her remorse for having, as she said, heedlessly accepted Apperton, she wept at her own infidelity, Maxwell bade her console herself, for, said he, "had you remained for ever single, and Somerford had returned laden with all the wealth of the empire from which he comes, he never should have been your husband with *my* consent. If," added he, "this truth can relieve you from any regrets on that point, believe your father. There is an objection in my mind so strong against an alliance with him, that, although the son of a man with whom I once was upon terms of the closest intimacy, and for whom, I may add, I felt, at one period of my life, almost a brotherly affection, I never could have received him as a son-in-law."

The consolation, as Maxwell thought it, which Kate was to

derive from this violent opposition of her father to Charles, was considerably qualified by the stigma which it seemed to affix upon the character or qualities of one who never could cease to be dear to her; and when her father had made this declaration, she entreated him to speak no more on the subject. The die was cast—her fate was fixed; and by the strengthening aid of religion, and the exercise of those principles in which she had been brought up, she would truly and faithfully fulfil the vows she had plighted at the altar. "But oh!" added she, "do not, do not seek to alleviate my regrets by deteriorating from the character of my poor lost Charles. Ease, comfort, happiness, obtained by lowering *him* in my estimation, by destroying the bright vision I have formed of his excellence and his future eminence, would be to me but little worth. No, my father; Charles Somerford is all honour, all goodness, and all truth! That he is nothing to me, takes not from that goodness, nor can it blind me to his virtues; but I am not so entirely selfish—not so thoroughly worldly—but I can look on what I have lost with the same eye of admiration and affection, separated from the tender feelings with which they were once blended, and apart from those sentiments which I myself solemnly renounced, when I pledged my faith as a wife to another."

"Kate," said her father, "you are a kind, excellent girl. At this moment, to argue, to speak on the subject of Somerford, would be idle and cruel. Your fever and general disorder are the natural results of high excitement and powerful agitation, and to endeavour to stem the current of your feelings would be madness. As far as all that duty demands, I need never speak to my child. For the past, time alone can do the work. Believe me, Kate, that what I say with respect to Somerford, I say merely in the hope of reconciling you to what has occurred, and with no view of lowering him in your estimation. Of this you will perhaps be convinced, when I tell you that, insuperable as was my objection to him as a son-in-law, it arises from events over which he could have had no control, and which implicate neither his personal honour nor his individual character."

It was after the conversation of which I have given this brief abstract, that Maxwell went down to the dinner parlour; whence, after having hastily partaken of the fare, he again returned to Kate's room. Shortly after, at her desire, he sent a message to Edward, desiring his attendance, his sister having expressed a wish to see him. Moss, however, was not included.

in the invitation, because Maxwell was certain he would begin upon the only subject which it was their chief anxiety to avoid; and as Moss, who never liked Apperton much, now liked him less, he resolved not to subject himself to a *tête-à-tête* with him, and accordingly finding that he was excluded from the chaise, he wrapped himself up in his well-furred cloak, and, spite of the darkness and cold, neither of which well "suited his complaint," he betook himself to the house of an ancient friend of his, who greatly sympathized with him in an affection for cigars and hot gin-and-water, and where he knew he could indulge in his passion with impunity; Moss, moreover, not at all liking the "house of mourning," and preferring, as speedily as his legs would permit him, to exchange the "doleful dumps" at Maxwell's (where he found himself not "called in," and rather thought himself "left out,") for the society of his convivial crony in the vicinity of the Steyne.

Off he went, getting what he called "a sniff of the briney," on his way along the cliff, and leaving word that he should be in by ten; thereby implying that he should be only temporarily absent, and by naming the hour, marking his confidence and belief that supper, so generally adopted at Maxwell's in London, would not be relinquished in his residence on the coast.

There are a vast number of ways of making the agreeable in society, and several of these pleasant knacks did Godfrey Moss himself possess; but the mode he this afternoon adopted happened to be unconsciously, as far as he was himself concerned, the most acceptable that he could possibly have hit upon; and it was one which many other vastly charming people might perhaps occasionally try with equal success. I mean that of walking himself off. Maxwell felt conscious that, after what had occurred in the course of the day, Apperton would expect (as indeed he ought to have) some explanation of the circumstances under which Katherine and Somerford had been so strongly affected by the sight of each other, as well as of the precise nature of the acquaintance and connexion which had formerly subsisted between them.

Maxwell, although conscious of the propriety and necessity of making this explanation, was equally conscious that it would be impossible to put his design into execution in the presence of Moss, who would be sure to keep up a sort of running commentary, by glass, voice, and snuff-box, upon all that his friend the surgeon might advance in elucidation of the unpleasant events of the forenoon; therefore, when he retired to the dinner-room, full of his object, and anxious to set things to

rights, but with all the dread of Godfrey's burlesque and sarcasm before his eyes, his satisfaction may easily be imagined when he found the coast clear, and Apperton alone, sitting gazing at the fire, and seeing in the glowing embers the brilliant chambers of the teeming mines, of which he was so extensive a shareholder, and longing for the return of his father-in-law from his wife's room, in order to hear, not as a very tender husband in the first week of the honeymoon ought to have wished, how his beloved Kate was going on; but what truth there was in the account of the failure of a second banking-house in the city, of which the rumour had the day before reached Brighton, and what, if possible, was the price of the North Shields Sawdust Consolidation Company's shares at the last quotation.

The reverie of the stockbroker terminated, and Maxwell joined him.

"Kate," said Maxwell, "I am glad to say, is better; she must remain quiet, and I hope a few days will set her to rights again—Moss is gone, I see."

"He is gone on a visit to a friend," said Apperton; "he found me dull, I suppose; I am not in a very conversible humour upon general topics, I confess."

"That is not very surprising, Apperton," said Maxwell; "I can perfectly understand and entirely appreciate your feelings."

"Pray," said Apperton, "did you hear before you left town whether it is true that Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown, have stopped?"

"I did not hear," said Maxwell.

"Did my clerk send you the list of share-prices up to twelve to-day, as I wrote word?" said Apperton.

"No," said Maxwell, "I only saw yesterday's list."

"Dear heart, how provoking!" said Apperton. "I wanted so much to know, because I could have written to-night, to direct him what to do at the office—I think I shall be obliged to go up to town in the morning."

Maxwell, whose sense of honour was extremely strong, and whose perception was amazingly acute, saw, in this little conversation with Apperton, not only a desire on his part to evade any thing like explanation with him on the subject of Somerford, but a determination to call his rival immediately to account for his conduct; and perhaps subsequently to make the acknowledged affection which Kate and Charles had so

distinctly avowed, the ground-work of a separation from his newly-acquired wife.

That Maxwell was never more mistaken in his life, the reader, who has seen Apperton through a much clearer medium than bundles of bonds, shares, and scrip, will easily believe; of attachments, except legal ones, Apperton knew little; and as for calling out, it was a term to which he never would have applied any meaning, except as relating to the noisy proclamation of names by the porters of the stock-exchange, as the jobbers and brokers who belong to the house happen to be wanted by their uninitiated customers outside.

Maxwell, who had established his son-in-law in his mind as a paragon of excellence, thought he had fathomed his intentions, and anticipated the character of his expedition to London.

"Apperton," said Maxwell, "I am not to be told that what you have just said is meant as an honourable disguise to your real feelings and views at this crisis—you have no anxiety about the stopping of banking-houses, nor any care as to buying and selling of shares."

"What have I done, sir," said Apperton, "to justify such an opinion of me?—have I ever neglected your business, or that of any other client? (in these times shoemakers, and coachmakers, and tailors, and all the rest of the handicraftsmen of the metropolis call their customers, clients; excepting always the wealthy bankers, who call their customers—customers, and their shops—shops.) "I do assure you, that if 'Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown,' have stopped, it will be a very serious thing for a great many of us, and it must be looked to; and as for selling the shares, Mr. Maxwell, of course I should not sell any of yours without advice; but I see no use in holding, if they happen to tumble."

"Assure yourself, Apperton," said Maxwell, "that I never meant to undervalue your qualities as a man of business—my confidence in you has been practically evinced—all I possess in the world I have placed at your disposal, and under your management; that of itself is a sufficient proof of *my* opinion: but I know the world and human nature, and I know that it is impossible for you to reflect upon the occurrences of this day, before our arrival here, without feelings of a most acute nature, and which it will require a clear and candid explanation on my part to heal and moderate."

"How, sir?" said Apperton, still adhering to his plan of ignorance—a system which upon most points he would have

found incomparably successful: "I know of nothing particular that has happened, except, indeed, this sudden indisposition of Kate's, which, as you say she will soon be better, I conclude is not very serious or important."

"Not the illness itself," said Maxwell; "that might not, as it need not alarm or agitate you, but the cause of it cannot fail, I think, to excite some unpleasant sensations."

"Cause!" said Apperton; "I'm sure, sir, I am not to blame. I—if the sea air, or the bracing nature of the atmosphere, or the—"

"Come, come," said Maxwell, "we had better meet the question fairly and honourably. The arrival of Captain Somerford so inopportunely at this place, is indeed a circumstance very much to be regretted."

"I think his sudden departure more so," said Apperton, "for he had promised to dine here to-day, which, as an old friend of yours and hers, as Kate told me he was, I invited him to do; but he wrote me word that he was hurried to London upon particular business, and so could not come to us."

"You surely did not expect that he would come," said Maxwell, "when he became aware of the nature of your connexion with my daughter."

"Oh! I don't know any thing about that," said Apperton."

"Not know!" said Maxwell; "why, Apperton, you do not mean to plead ignorance of the fact that my daughter's affections as a girl—a child almost—were fixed upon Somerford, and that I objected to him on certain points; and that although the son of a particular friend, I procured him a commission in a regiment on foreign service, in order to break off the intercourse with my family?"

"Indeed," said Apperton, "I—I didn't know—that is, I—"

"Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, who was all candour himself, and could not endure shuffling in others, "you carry this too far. If you have an intention of proceeding to extremities with this young gentleman, which I must say, whatever your feelings may be, would be highly unjustifiable and unwarrantable, your attempt to blind me by a denial of even a suspicion of facts with which you are perfectly well acquainted, is childish and absurd. If you are determined, for no earthly reason but revenge, as it seems to me, to imbrue your hands in the blood of an honourable and high-spirited young soldier, of course I have no control over your actions; but, at the same time, I cannot but protest against such a line of proceeding, and, above all, I must deprecate the mode in which you evade

the explanation I am ready to give you, by a denial of that which is already self-evident."

"I deny nothing," said Apperton; "I'm not going to imbrue my hands in anybody's blood; I have no quarrel—nuance of quarrel with Captain Somerford, who, besides being a friend of yours, seems to me to be a remarkably nice, spruce, genial young man; and as for fighting anybody because he does not choose to dine with me, I'll leave it to any two of the best men on the stock-exchange to say whether that's necessary."

"Still," said Maxwell, "you treat jestingly what I know must weigh deeply on your mind. The letter which Captain Somerford addressed to your wife is the document to which I refer; you there saw the explanation of the writer, and his allusions to my conduct in the affair; it is *my* explanation upon those points that you shall now receive."

"Letter!" said Apperton, "did Captain Somerford write a letter to Kate? I——"

"Stop, stop, Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell; "recollect yourself—you *know* he wrote a letter to my daughter."

"To *me* a note," said Apperton, still shirking and shifting. "I have got it in my pocket—here it is; I have jotted down the posting money from town on the back of it."

"I mean no such thing," said Maxwell; "I mean the letter in which Somerford takes his leave of Kate for ever, and which you have read."

"I," said Apperton; "what—that—I—"

"Good God! Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, who began to believe that his evasions were but for the purpose of covering his very chivalrous designs; "I mean the letter which you read—the letter which my daughter gave *me* to read the moment I arrived, as the best and fullest explanation she could afford of what had occurred in the family."

"Oh," said Apperton, "Kate told you, did she? Oh! I *did* see a letter, but I did not know,—and I should not have mentioned it if she had not, because it is no good making a disturbance, when a thing is done it cannot be undone; and the offer of the jewels was very handsome, and I—yes—yes—I recollect now—I did——"

"And did you think so ill," said Maxwell, "of the daughter I have educated, and the woman you have married, as to believe that she would conceal from me or from yourself such a circumstance as the receipt of such a letter from such a quarter; you must have indeed underrated not only the qualities of my

child, but of every living woman of worth or character. In her case, concealment only could make her guilty."

"Why," said Apperton, rather pertly, "I did not know what she might like to do as regards *you*, because the day Captain Somerford landed, and when I saw his name on a trunk, and mentioned it to her, she did not acknowledge him as an acquaintance, or seem indeed as if she had ever even heard of him before."

"That she has told me also," said Maxwell; "but there is a vast difference between not acknowledging an acquaintance which is at an end, and which it was at that moment certainly not her intention to renew,—and receiving a serious appeal from a former lover, with whom, contrary to all expectation, she was brought into immediate contact."

"I am sure," said Apperton," "I am all for quiet, and I am very happy as I am; and I think the Captain has behaved very liberally, and very like a gentleman; but I cannot help saying, that it vexes me to find that Kate was induced to accept me, when, as every thing now shows, she was still hankering after him."

"Hankering!" said Maxwell, looking at Apperton as if he could have annihilated him. "Hankering is an inapplicable word, sir; my daughter, under my counsel, and at my desire, had banished Captain Somerford from her heart and recollection; he suddenly returns and stands before her—from her heart he is still excluded, but the sight of one who for several years, and those years when the strongest impressions are made, had been her constant companion, naturally excited her feelings, from the effects of which she is now suffering."

"Oh! I can easily fancy that," said Apperton: "as I say, he is a remarkably handsome, nice, agreeable man; and I am sure, as far as I am concerned, I see no reason, old acquaintance as he is of all of you, for his running away in the manner he did. I should not have been either the least jealous or uncomfortable, if he had staid here for a month."

Maxwell, who had never yet seen Apperton drawn out to his full extent, and had never till now applied the varnish to the whole length portrait of the stockbroker, looked at him for a minute or two without uttering a syllable, uncertain whether his son-in-law had hitherto been acting a part, in order to obtain his daughter, or that he himself had been till this day stone blind to his imperfections. The fact is, that the surgeon had hitherto only tried him by his professional merits, his knowledge of business, and his activity in taking advantage

of events likely to conduce to the profit of his principal: he had now got him on new ground; and it must be confessed, that, to a man of Maxwell's notions and principles, his debit in his new character was any thing but gratifying. Of one thing, however, he was quite satisfied, namely, that he need entertain no alarm on the subject of his hostility towards Somerford.

"Why," said Maxwell, after expending about a minute in stirring the fire, "there is no accounting for the difference which exists in the construction and quality of minds; you speak fairly and truly of your confidence in Kate, and your reliance on the honour of Somerford; but to hearts like theirs, the idea would be insupportable. In short, such an association would be utterly impossible, even if custom and the ways of the world did not suggest its impropriety."

"Well, sir," said Apperton, "all I have to say I have said before. I think nothing of what is past one way or another, only I am afraid that however Kate may keep her old sweetheart out of sight, she won't keep him out of mind; and I think, though I should not say so, that it would have been better to have let her had her own way at first."

"Your generosity of feeling does you honour," said Maxwell, "generally speaking, and I as a father, not particular for severity or coercion, agree with you; but there are certain feelings and prejudices existing in certain minds, that are insuperable; there existed an obstacle to Somerford's union with my daughter, which I never could have surmounted; his want of fortune might have been, and indeed has been, overcome by circumstances; but with my feelings, and a pride which I confess savours somewhat of illiberality, but which I inherit from a long line of ancestors, from whom I am but a very unworthy descendant, I never could have reconciled his peculiar case to my views for my daughter."

"Any thing disgraceful?" said Apperton.

"Not in himself," replied Maxwell; "nor indeed in any thing over which he could have a control; the fact is, Apperton, I am proud—and that's the truth. Now many of our most illustrious families have their sources in illegitimacy, and in the highest ranks of life, where the prohibition of the law itself intervenes to prevent a prince's marrying the object of his affections because her blood is not royal, the offspring of a cruelly qualified connexion, are, to my mind, exceptions to the general rule I have laid down."

"I see, sir," said Apperton.

"Now," continued Maxwell, Somerford is the son of a most intimate friend of mine, who married early in life a very amiable person, the daughter, as he believed, of very respectable parents in Suffolk; and it was not until the death of his wife's believed mother, that my friend knew he had married the offspring of some unknown parents, who had consigned her, with a marriage portion, to the care of this family. Now, if she had been the daughter of these people, humble as they were, I should have felt no repugnance at the connexion; but here is Somerford, without relation or connexion, descended from some man's natural child, most unnaturally discarded. That, Apperton, is the insuperable objection which must always have interposed itself between Charles Somerford and my daughter, in the way of man and wife. I tell you this in confidence, to calm your feelings of regret on her account, although I have never mentioned to Katherine the real impediment to what, in other days, she considered the completion of her happiness."

"And, sir," said Apperton, rising, and looking exceedingly angry, "if you had spared yourself the trouble of making the communication to *me*, *I* should have felt your forbearance more civil than your explanation. I see, sir, that now Captain Somerford is returned, my feelings are not to be considered; and that what I am almost inclined to believe cannot have been the true reason for your refusal of him, is now lugged forward for the purpose of wounding me upon the most tender point."

"You!" said Maxwell. "How an explanation intended to dissipate any disagreeable feelings on your part—how that should be thus misinterpreted into an insult, I cannot possibly understand; and why you should doubt its sincerity, I am still more at a loss to conceive."

"Why, sir," said Apperton, his face crimsoned with anger and agitation, "I cannot believe that the illegitimacy of Captain Somerford's mother should have induced you to decline him as a son-in-law; and if it did, I cannot see the necessity of insulting *me* by mentioning it."

"Insult," repeated Maxwell.

"Insult!" said Apperton; "have I not a heart to feel? have I not a head to discern? have I not a hand to execute? have I not devoted myself to your interests? am I not at this moment involved on every side by furthering the most promising schemes for your enrichment?"

"I admit it, my dear Apperton," said Maxwell.

"What have I done, then, sir," continued the stockbroker,

"to have reproaches cast upon me? Could I have been more interested for you—or more able; more assiduous—or more interested for you; or could I be more devoted to your child, or more attached to yourself and your family, if I had been a legitimate son of my father? And as to that being the ground of refusal to Somerford, it is idle; and only now mentioned to debase me, else why was I accepted?"

"I really do not comprehend," said Maxwell, "are you——"

"—— Yes, sir, I am," said Apperton, "one of those despised of the proud—one of those, an alliance with whom is called a reproach to the last descendant of a long line of ancestors;—descended, indeed"—

"But, Mr. Apperton, I never understood that fact," said Maxwell.

"You never inquired," said the stockbroker; "and as I was not in the habit of considering myself disgraced by my father's libertinism, or my mother's indiscretion, I never mentioned a story, which it seems you have now somehow or other discovered."

"I discovered!" said Maxwell; "not I, upon my soul and honour; acquit me of the wish or thought to wound or offend you. It is true, I never sought what you did not advance—I relied—and—

"And you will not be deceived," said Apperton; "you sought an honest man to be your daughter's husband—*you* have found one—let that content you, sir; and as for *merit*, there is surely more merit in founding a family, than inheriting the honours of an old one; it is better to be the root of the tree, than a withered leafless branch, even at the top."

"Far be it from me to gainsay you," said Maxwell, who was nigh sinking through the floor of the apartment; "I said at the outset, that I admitted the weakness and folly of the prejudice I had inherited; and let me implore you, above all things, to believe that the allusion to the subject was made in an entire unconsciousness that any remark which fell from me, could by any possibility be applicable to yourself."

Having said this, and having received a warm yet silent shake of the hand from his friend Apperton, Maxwell, who had now the satisfaction of finding that he had destroyed the happiness of his daughter eternally for the sake of avoiding a misfortune only in the second degree, by connecting her with a man who in his own person entailed it upon his family in the first, felt anxious, if he could do it without any great abruptness or indelicacy, to ascertain more particularly the nature of

the connexion of which his son-in-law was the existing result, and if either of his parents were still living. Apperton, whether he saw the desire of his father-in-law, I know not, saved him the trouble of circumlocution by reverting to the subject.

"I am satisfied," said Apperton, "by what you say, sir, that you did not mean to annoy me. But it is curious, isn't it, that the conversation should have taken the turn it has done, so soon after my marriage, and that such a topic never should have been started before; for if it *had*, I should have been as candid then as I am now; and still more curious is it, that your objection to Somerford should have been grounded on events, which, I suppose, in case we had discussed the question, would have driven *me* also from the connexion."

Maxwell was for once in his life puzzled for an answer. He merely made a sort of noise between an affirmative and a grunt, entirely indescribable in writing, but which may perhaps be understood, if not expressed.

"My father," said Apperton, with all the suavity and simplicity of Norval himself, "was a merchant of London, and left me a very handsome sum of money; indeed, at his death, I found myself in possession, as I have before mentioned, of about thirty thousand pounds. This, in the course of business, has fluctuated, and I have every reason to be satisfied with my lot, and thankful to my parent, who, though not bound by any religious form to consider me as he did, never married, and bequeathed me at his death all he possessed."

"And," said Maxwell, determined to make a plunge, and know all the particulars at once, "your mother——?"

"Keeps the Cat and Cauliflower on Ratcliff-highway. She married the landlord of the house, by whom she has had six children; and although I have frequently suggested her retirement, and offered her any sum by way of annuity, she declines, upon the principle of sharing the fate of the honest man who married her, knowing, as he did, all the circumstances of the case, and of providing for her family, to whom she is devotedly attached, by their own industry. She is now in her sixty-fourth year, and takes more relaxation than she formerly did. The sons chiefly carry on the business, and two of the daughters are very respectably married. These are circumstances which of course I do not ordinarily bring forward, but the conversation has produced the confession. One of the sons, (in fact, one of my brothers, as I consider him,) you

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